



Institute of IT Training

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS (Personally Funded Training)

A guidance document for Training Providers





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Code of Practice for IT training providers (personally funded training)

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Code of Practice for IT training providers

IT users in the UK benefit from one of the most advanced IT training environments anywhere in the world. In general, Training Providers provide a value-for-money range of quality training products and services to their client organisations. However, in a business environment which is ever-increasingly competitive, it is important for training providers to align to best-practice and be able to demonstrate that they provide the client organisation with top quality and cost effective training products and services.

It is an Institute objective to assist in the raising of standards in IT training across the board, and the Training Provider Accreditation Programme (PFT) is a key component of this. Note that this programme accredits the company: it does NOT accredit individual courses.

This Code of Practice provides the basis for the Institute of IT Training's Training Provider (Personally Funded Training) Accreditation Programme through which the Institute will maintain and monitor a register of approved providers of information technology training operating in the Personally Funded Training space. Organisations which undertake voluntarily to abide by the terms of this code of practice and can demonstrate that they do so are eligible to be accredited by the Institute

Definitions

In this code of practice:

- "Client" means any person or organisation that enters into a contract with a provider for training in information technology;
- "Course" means any programme of training in information technology, however conducted, which purports to be complete in itself;
- "Student" means any person taking a course;
- "Provider" means any enterprise, institution or organisation accredited by the IITT as an approved provider of information technology training in the personally funded training space.

Publicity and promotion

- In promotional literature, advertisements and other forms of promotion, providers shall express themselves clearly and without ambiguity so that the reader may know exactly what is being offered and to what he /she is committing to by responding.
- Providers shall not give false or misleading indications, whether by words, illustrations or other means, in relation to either their products and services or to the products and services of any other training organisations.
- Providers shall not make any statements which cannot readily be substantiated.

- Providers shall not publish any advertisement which may be confused with that of any other training organisation.
- Fictitious testimonials shall not be used, and testimonial; from the provider's own staff, relatives or agents shall not be used unless their interest is explicitly declared. No testimonial shall be used more than three years after the date on which it was written.
- Publicity and promotional material may make reference to this Code of Practice only in such form as the IITT may approve.

Sales, selection and pre-entry processes

- During the sales process, providers and their sales representatives shall not place undue pressure on prospective students to purchase or make a decision whether by telephone, email, letter or during face-to-face meetings.
- Providers shall ensure that alternative options to home visits for pre-sales purposes are available to prospective purchasers.
- Providers shall ensure that sales representatives are given regular training and updates on products and services.
- Providers shall ensure that sales representatives and all persons involved in pre-sales activities act in an ethical and responsible manner and do not give false or misleading information to prospective purchasers.
- Providers shall ensure that the performance and conduct of sales representatives is monitored and assessed on a regular basis.
- Providers shall adhere to the conditions and requirements of the Data Protection Act when requesting information from prospective students and existing students.
- The price of the product/service on offer shall be disclosed to prospective students.
- Where the student chooses to fund his/her training by means of a Career Development Loan, the provider will ensure that the student fully understands that the CDL remains their responsibility, whether or not the course/programme is completed.
- Where training premises are attended as part of the course on offer, the provider shall invite the prospective student to visit the facilities and meet with prospective trainers/tutors/existing students.
- Presentation and other materials used at open days shall contain accurate and realistic information about the products/services on offer.
- Providers shall ensure that prospective students are given adequate time to consider the purchase before committing.
- Providers shall take steps to ensure that student expectations are appropriately set with regard to attainment of certifications, job prospects, achievable salaries.

Technical prospectus

Prior to a client contracting for training services, the provider shall make information available on:

- the title of the course or group of courses;
- the training performance objectives to be achieved;
- the Training Needs Analysis services available from the provider;
- the award, if any, for which the course is designed to prepare students, and the name of the awarding body;
- the method of evaluation and the conditions for the awarding or with holding of completion certification;
- the syllabus of the course indicating the emphasis placed on each section, including practical work;
- the duration of the course and its starting and finishing times;
- the training methods used and indication of class size;
- a profile of the student for whom the course is designed, including prerequisite and/or desirable experience;
- the level and nature of support provided throughout the learning period;
- the level of protection afforded the student in the event that the provider goes into liquidation;

- any required dress code for students and any rules governing student conduct whilst attending the course, together with the consequences of lapses from the standards and rules - the provider will issue every student with a similar statement at the time of enrolment;

- the practical work that students carry out including a statement of the available equipment;

- the percentage of students who take exams, associated pass rates and numbers of re-takes; (suggest this data is made available if requested as needs to be fully explained and not just 'presented' in brochures) the percentage of students who fail to complete the course and reasons (as above)

- what post-course support is provided to students after they have attended the course;

- other information available by request, including details of the qualifications and experience of tutors. Prospective clients shall, at their own expense, be given the opportunity to inspect the training facilities if so required.

Commercial prospectus

In pre-contract quotations the provider shall state:

- specifically what products and services are included in the proposal and quotation;
the total cost and payment schedule if payment is by instalments;
- any reserved rights to change the content, timetable, location, date and fee in respect of any course;
- the rights of the client and provider if for any reason the course is not completed or if the course is cancelled by either client or provider;
- the refund policy, if any, the responsibility for payment of fees and the associated liabilities of the client;
whether the course documentation is subject to copyright law;
- that the provider subscribes to and abides by the Institute of IT Training's Code of Practice.

- Providers shall ensure that Terms and Conditions are clearly laid out, visible and accessible to prospective students and provide an explanation if requested.
- Providers shall ensure that prospective students have adequate time to read and understand the Terms and Conditions before committing to the purchase.
- Providers shall allow a suitable cooling-off period once the sale has been agreed, in accordance with the method of sale.
- Providers shall provide invoices that detail the breakdown of course fees, exam fees and other chargeable services provided for clarity.
- Providers shall ensure that payment options are not limited to cash only.
- Providers shall act in a responsible and ethical manner in offering or recommending finance terms/options.
- Providers shall issue receipts for all purchases/sales and deposits paid.

Course controls

Providers shall:

- ensure that tutors possess the necessary technical expertise to present a course;
- ensure that tutors are fully competent in the appropriate techniques of instruction, verifiable by either holding the IITT's Certificate in IT Training Skills, or another certificate in training practice as recognised by the IITT, or by demonstrably working towards the attainment of same;
- ensure that tutors keep abreast of current developments appropriate to their training responsibilities and can describe how this is achieved;
- ensure that all course materials and documentation are reasonably accurate and up-to-date;
- ensure that the training facilities provided are appropriate to the course and offer an environment conducive to the students' learning;
- assume ultimate and complete responsibility for any training contracted with their organisation whether conducted by full-time employees or not;
- at course conclusion, offer students the opportunity of giving a written evaluation of the course to the provider, information about which shall be made available to the client;
- ensure that clients/students are surveyed post-attendance/post-training to measure client/student satisfaction, achievement of stated programme/ course objectives.

Job placement

Where providers offer placement assistance, details of this assistance should be made clear prior to a contract for training being entered into. The provider shall include in this information the number of students from recent courses who used the service and the number placed in suitable employment. A disclaimer of guarantee for securing job placement for students on completion of their training shall be made by the provider.

External controls

- Providers shall make available to the IITT such statistical, documentary and other information at the IITT may reasonably require to be assured that the code of practice is being observed.
- Providers shall co-operate with scheduled IITT monitoring visits and facilitate access to training courses by accreditation verifiers.

Complaints procedure

A statement of the procedures for making and responding to complaints shall routinely be made available by providers to clients with whom they have contracted.

Providers shall respond to client complaints in a prompt and courteous manner.

Should the provider not satisfy the complaint to the satisfaction of the client, the provider will advise the client of their right to notify the IITT of the outstanding complaint. A form, together with a Complaints Procedure form, available from the IITT, shall be supplied by the provider.

Complaints by clients shall then be made direct to the IITT and must generally be made within 30 days of the provider having given an initial response to the complainant.

If the IITT is satisfied that a complaint against a provider is justified, the provider shall be bound by the IITT's decision on the matter.

The Institute's complaints procedure

This procedure is administered in conjunction with the IITT code of practice for training providers operating in the personally funded training space. It provides a mechanism for making, receiving and examining complaints by clients against providers in respect of any matter covered by the code of practice.

Complaints committee

The executive of the IITT shall establish a three-person committee which will manage the detailed operation of this procedure.

Notification of complaints

- The secretary shall take such steps as are necessary to clarify and define the complaint, at the same time ensuring that the complainant has fully taken up the matter with the training provider before invoking the IITT Complaints Procedure.

- The secretary shall refer the complaint to the provider who shall be required to make written response within fourteen working days setting out a detailed explanation.
- The secretary shall refer the response made by the provider to the client. If the client is not satisfied with the provider's response, the secretary will refer the matter to the Complaints Committee.
- The Complaints Committee shall consider the complaint at its next monthly meeting, requesting further information if required, and shall notify the client and the provider of its findings.
- Either party may, within 30 days of being notified of the findings of the Complaints Committee, appeal to the Chief Executive of the IITT.
- The secretary shall keep the Chief Executive of the IITT informed of all complaints received and actions taken on such complaints and shall also keep the parties involved in a complaint informed at all stages.

Appeals procedure

- The secretary shall submit to the Chief Executive of the IITT all appeals together with all relevant material considered by the Complaints Committee.
- The Chief Executive of the IITT will consider the appeal and will advise the parties of its decision within fourteen working days. The decision of the Chief Executive will be final.

Further Information

For further information, please contact the Institute's Standards Secretary.