Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)

Mapping Guidelines

Contents

Introduction

All apprenticeship frameworks in England must specify the outcomes which an apprentice has to achieve in order to successfully complete the requirements. The framework is decided by industry as to what an apprentice must have to be successful in the world of work.

Each of the framework elements are listed below:

- Knowledge qualification
- Competence qualification
- Key skills/ Functional skills
- Employee Rights and Responsibilities known as ERR
- **Personal, Learning Thinking Skills known as PLTS**

This document details the requirements for Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and supports you through the delivery of the apprenticeship programme.

PLTS Overview

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills is a new requirement for inclusion in an Apprenticeship framework and covers six groups of skills that an apprentice has to achieve:

- independent enquiry
- creative thinking
- reflective learning, team working
- self management
- effective participation

All frameworks must clearly specify how the achievement of the six elements is to be evidenced by the apprentice. Examples of this may be through completion of a specific qualification or through completion of a workbook.

PLTS must be formally assessed and an audit trail provided that demonstrates clearly where, how, when and who assessed the PLTS in a similar way to qualifications with NVQ in the title.

Delivery

Apprentices must be introduced to PLTS during induction so that they learn to recognise for themselves when and where they are practicing these skills. Each of the PLTS has been signposted/mapped to a number of the QCF units and apprentices will achieve the PLTS by completing these units. During this process the trainer/assessor will be required to coach and mentor individual learners to ensure they have a good understanding of how they covered the PLTS components of the framework.

Although PLTS are referenced and mapped to QCF units within the qualifications, training delivery should be flexible and care must be taken to avoid discrimination against those who have a requirement for reasonable adjustment or special considerations for assessment.

Internal Quality Assurance

Centres will be required to demonstrate the learners understanding of how the PLTS has been covered and have in place a robust Quality Assurance system that provides an audit trail to each of the decisions and how the learner has demonstrated each of the PLTS. This could be demonstrated through a portfolio system or other evidence based processes that demonstrate how the learner has agreed and demonstrated their understanding and new skills. A simple matrix system would provide both an audit trail and tracking system showing the assessment decisions.

It is recommended that the internal quality assurance person to hold a verification qualification. Full details can be found in ProQual's requirements for approved centres.

ProQual has produced a PLTS tracking matrix to help you with this requirement, which can be found alongside this document on the ProQual website.

External Quality Assurance

ProQual will externally quality assure the PLTS in the same way as training and competence qualifications. The ProQual requirements for approved centres will be used as a framework to assure and uphold the quality of delivery and internal quality assurance.

Record Keeping

In line with ProQual's requirements for approved centres Section 3 - Monitoring & Review, 3.1 - Records centres:

> *Candidate records and details of achievements/credit accumulation are accurate and kept up to date, securely stored in line with ProQual requirements, and available for external verification and auditing* ; and *Assessment records are maintained in line with ProQual requirements and made available for the purposes of auditing.*

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

The six groups of skills are:

Independent enquiry
Creative thinking
Reflective learning
Team working
Self management
Effective participation

For each group of skills a focus statement sums up the range of skills. This is accompanied by a set of outcome statements that are indicative of the skills, behaviours and personal qualities associated with each group.

Each group is distinctive and coherent. The groups are also interconnected. Learners are likely to encounter skills from several groups in any one learning experience. For example, independent enquirers set goals for their research with clear success criteria (reflective learners) and organise and manage their time and resources effectively to achieve these goals (self-manager).

In order to acquire and develop fundamental concepts such as organising oneself, managing change, taking responsibility and persevering, learners will need to apply skills from all six groups in a wide range of learning contexts.

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) Focus & Outcome Statements

Independent enquiry

Focus:
Apprentices can process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.

Outcome statement:
• Identify questions to answer and problems to resolve
• Plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions
• Explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives
• Analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value
• Consider the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events
• Support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence

Creative thinking

Focus:
Apprentices think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

Outcome statement:
• Generate ideas and explore possibilities
• Ask questions to extend their thinking
• Connect their own and others ideas and experiences in inventive ways
• Question their own and others assumptions
• Try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through
• Adapt ideas as circumstances change

Reflective learning

Focus:
Apprentices evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.

Outcome statement:
• Assess themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements
• Set goals with success criteria for their development and work
• Review progress, acting on the outcomes
• Invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
• Evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress
• Communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences

Team working

Focus:
Apprentices work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.

Outcome statement:
• Collaborate with others to work towards common goals
• Reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results
• Adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations, including leadership roles
• Show fairness and consideration to others
• Take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution
• Provide constructive support and feedback to others

Self management

Focus:
Apprentices organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.

Outcome statement:
• Seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change
• Work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance
• Organise time and resources, prioritising actions
• Anticipate, take and manage risks
• Deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands
• Respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed
• Manage their emotions, and build and maintain relationships

Effective participation

Focus:
Apprentices actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsibility for others as well as themselves.

Outcome statement:
- Discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed
- Present a persuasive case for action
- Propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps
- Identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves

- Try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions
- Act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own

PLTS Mapping Guidelines

Evidence to cover the PLTS units and elements can be mapped from the evidence produced to cover the QCF unit learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Refer to the appropriate qualification under the Apprenticeships section of the ProQual website.

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