

S.W.A.A.T
(SOUTH WEST ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING)



Candidate Handbook

Your guide to the centre

Information

Centre Mission Statement

'To provide specialist further and higher education programmes in the service industry and related areas as a centre for educational excellence'.

Centre Sites

Main Site

SWAAT College for Alternative Energies,
1 Owen Sivell Close,
Liskeard Business Park,
Liskeard,
PL14 3RP

Centre of educational excellence:

SWAAT,
1 Quimperle Way,
Liskeard Business Park,
Liskeard,
PL14 3US

Tel: 01579 348544

Fax: 01579 340555

Opening times:

Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.00pm

Who's who

Centre Manager

Mike Kent is responsible for the day to day management of the centre. The team members are:

Kevin Kendall, Instructor/Assessor

Sally Kent: Instructor/Assessor

Jeff Honey: Instructor/Assessor

Tracy Trembeth: Reception/ Administration

Claire Skews: Administration

Paul Lower: Facilities

Equality and Diversity Statement – Opportunity for all

The centre is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all candidates and employees.

This will be achieved in three ways

1. The centre will develop procedures and working practices to tackle discrimination, recognising the fact that individuals may suffer various forms of disadvantage. The centre will work to continuously ensure the environment for staff and candidates is harmonious and safe.
2. Equal opportunities will be applied consistently across all aspects of service delivery, including admissions, candidate services, learning support, curriculum development, teaching, learning and marketing.
3. As an employer, the centre will ensure that equal opportunities will be applied to the principles of recruitment, redeployment, staff development and promotion, to ensure all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

The centre aims to ensure that all actual or potential candidates and employees are treated equally regardless of: disability; responsibility for dependents; marital status; race; colour; ethnicity; nationality; religion; gender; sexual orientation; unrelated criminal convictions; age(subject to contractual retirement age); other irrelevant criteria.

The centre believes that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable, and seeks to challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination whenever it occurs.

For more information please ask a member of staff for a copy of the Equality and Diversity Policies.

Disability Statement

SWAAT are committed to the principles of equality and diversity and welcomes applications from learners with a disability or learning difficulty. The college aims to support all learners individual needs wherever possible to enable all learners to achieve to their full potential.

In accordance to the duties laid out in the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Equality Duty 2006, SWAAT will not discriminate against a disabled person:

- In the arrangements it makes for determining admissions to the centre
- In the terms on which it offers to admit him or her to the centre
- By refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for his or her admission to the centre

- By providing any learner service it provides, or offers to provide in a manner or form that might disadvantage a disabled learner
- By excluding them from the centre, whether permanently or temporarily due to their disability

In accordance with the above Acts the centre will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments for a disabled person to access any service provided by the centre. By doing so, the centre will not treat a disabled person less favourably (for a reason related to his/her disability) than it treats other learners.

Learners should note however that the centre can not be expected to take action or make reasonable adjustments if it is not aware of the learner's disability. It is therefore vital that learners declare their disability to the college at the earliest opportunity through the mechanisms provided.

Data Protection Statement

Data Protection Act 1998 – The information you provide to the centre may be passed to the Learning and Skills Council (the LSC). The LSC is responsible for funding, planning and encouraging education and training for young people and adults in England, and is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide may be shared with other organisations for the purpose of administration, careers and other guidance, and statistical and research purposes. Other organisations with which we will share information include: Higher Education Funding Council for England, educational institutions and organisations performing research and statistical work on behalf of the LSC or its partners.

The LSC also administers the learner registration service (LRS) which will use your information to create and maintain a unique learner number (ULN). The LSC is also a co-financing organisation and uses European Social Funds from the European Union to directly or indirectly part-finance learning activities, helping develop employment by promoting employability, business spirit and equal opportunities, and investing in human resources. Further information about partner organisations and the ULN and what they do, may be found at www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/Data/help/ and by following the links to data protection. Individuals can opt-out of sharing participation and achievement data with those organisations listed in section 537A of the education act. Details of opting-out of data sharing can be found at www.miap.gov.uk or by telephoning the MIAP helpdesk on 0845 6022589.

At no time will your personal information be passed to organisations for marketing or sales purposes. From time to time candidates are approached to take part in surveys by mail and phone, which are aimed at enabling the LSC and its partners to monitor performance, improve quality and plan future provision.

Learner Agreement – Your Responsibilities

As a learner at SWAAT you agree to:

- Take your studies seriously, attend all workshops and classes, hand in assignments by set deadlines and complete all work within the specified time allocated.
- Be punctual for all classes.
- Follow the absence reporting procedure in all cases where you cannot attend any agreed session.
- Seek advice from staff, where appropriate, and notify us if you are experiencing any difficulties.
- Participate actively in any reviews of your progress if necessary and discuss your needs with appropriate staff.
- Keep all assessment feedback, record forms, assignments and programme handbooks.
- Read carefully and be familiar with the contents of the Candidate Handbook.
- Abide by all centre policies, procedures and codes of conduct that apply to you.
- Give staff accurate information at all times.
- Be familiar with the safety rules and regulations within the centre (see Health & Safety section of this Handbook)
- Keep workstations and bays clean and tidy at all times.
- Pay all fees and charges for which you are liable on time.
- Respect others, regardless of differences in culture, ability, race, gender, age or sexual orientation.
- Behave in an appropriate manner (as will staff) at all times, and display a courteous attitude to fellow candidates and staff.
- Not disrupt or prevent the learning activities of other learners.
- Return all books, equipment or other materials loaned to you, and return them in good condition.
- Ensure that you inform the centre of any change to your home or term-time address.

And you understand that if you fail to adhere to the above this could result in disciplinary action under the Candidate Disciplinary Code.

Catering

A sandwich/hot food service is available at both sites, hot and cold meals at lunch times, are available. Prices are kept as low as possible.

Visits and Work Experience

Your programme on site assessment at your place of work or employment. Some visits are not free and must be paid for by you. If this is the case, you will be informed of this in advance. Where there is a charge you must pay in full by the given deadline or the visit will not take place.

Candidate Support Advisers

If you have any queries about an academic issue i.e. things to do with your programme, assignments, assessment grades etc. you should see our administration staff or your instructor.

Support for Candidates with Disabilities

If you have a disability you should already have disclosed this to the centre during application, interview or enrolment.

If you have a disability but have not yet told anyone at the centre about it please contact us on 01579 348544.

You will be asked to complete a disclosure form so we are authorised by you to share information about your disability with all staff who will need to know. Any support needs will be discussed and agreed with you before being put into place.

Support for Candidates with Learning Difficulties

If it has already been identified that you have a learning difficulty you should have already disclosed this to the centre during application, interview or enrolment and provided a copy of any previous assessments you have had. If you have not yet done this please contact our administration staff or let your instructor know.

You will be asked to complete a disclosure form so we are authorised by you to share information about your disability with all staff who will need to know. Any support needs will be discussed and agreed with you before being put into place.

Our centre is unable to offer screening for learning difficulties, you are advised to contact Plymouth City College where they can carry out an assessment for learning difficulties, there may be a fee attached to this service, for more information please contact our administration staff.

Accommodation

The centre does not have any residential accommodation of its own but does maintain a list of privately rented properties available to candidates. Please contact our administration staff for more information.

Travel Arrangements

Car Parking

There is adequate parking within the centre for all candidates, and dedicated parking for candidates with disabilities.

Bicycle Storage

Storage for bicycles are available, ask at reception and we will advice you. Please do not lock your bike in a place where it may block emergency exits.

Public Transport

Centre sites are well served by public transport – trains and buses. Please refer to the traveline website at <http://www.traveline.info>.

Quality

Teaching Observation

At regular points every year instructors are observed whilst teaching. The observers can be other instructors, or an external person such as an Inspector. You may be in a session where this happens. If so, please behave as if the observer is not present. Although they may ask you questions or ask you to complete a questionnaire they are not assessing you, but are checking whether appropriate learning and teaching is taking place.

Your Comments

The centre welcomes and encourages your feedback on any aspect of your experience at this centre:

Questionnaires

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire at various points during your time at the college. Please make sure you complete them as honestly and accurately as possible and hand them in on time.

Academic Appeals Procedure

You may appeal against an assessment decision where:

- There may be evidence of sufficient material or administrative disadvantage to have affected your performance; or
- Assessment was not in accordance with the procedures, content or structures established for the programme concerned.

For further information on this procedure please see your tutor.

All candidates retain a final right of appeal to the centre manager, if you believe that your case has not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner you should contact the centre on 01579 348544.

Centre Rules & Procedures

Attendance & Punctuality

Centre timetables are designed to deliver teaching and learning to you in the number of hours and sessions needed by you to succeed on your Programme of Study. If you do not attend then you limit your ability to succeed, therefore the centre expects you to aim for 100% attendance and to be punctual. The centre has evidence that candidates who do not attend regularly and are not

on time generally do not achieve as well as those that do.

Candidates who are not punctual not only reduce their time for study but also delay and interrupt the teaching and learning of other candidates. It is therefore important that you arrive on time for the beginning of all classes. If you know that you will be late for a class, the centre expects you to warn the member of staff in advance. If you know that transport arrangements prevent you from arriving on time on a regular basis then you must discuss this with your lecturer.

The centre will be monitoring your attendance closely and will set targets for improvement if your attendance or punctuality becomes a concern.

Notifying the Centre of your absence

First day of Sickness / Absence

The following guidance applies to all full and part-time candidates.

If you are sick or unable to attend for any other reason you must notify the centre as soon as possible on the first day of absence, by calling 01579 348544.

Please try to call before 8.30am or before the start of your first workshop.

If you have attended workshops and are going home ill you must also notify the above.

A relative or friend can call on your behalf. You or the caller must state the following:

- Your name
- The programme you are attending
- How long the absence is likely to last
- Whether medical treatment is being sought

Your absence will then be recorded, and registers will reflect that you are sick and not on unauthorised absence.

Sickness of more than 7 calendar days

A self certification is required for any sickness lasting longer than 1 week (7 calendar days). Self-certification forms are available from your doctor. Completed forms must be handed in to the centre.

Sickness of more than 14 Calendar Days

Any candidate who cannot attend due to sickness for more than 14 calendar days must provide proof that they have sought professional medical advice.

Where possible a sick note or other signed confirmation of their illness should be provided. If the illness continues beyond the period of the first sick note, further sick notes (or other signed confirmation) should be submitted so that the whole period after the first 2 weeks is covered.

Absence other than sickness

All other absence must have prior approval. It is important that you discuss all such intended absences with your instructor.

If you are absent and not sick and have not sought prior approval you must speak with our administration staff on your return so that the reason can be documented and support put in place where required.

Failure to follow centre procedure

If you do not follow the above procedure and do not attend the centre you will receive an unauthorised absence mark in the registers. Persistent nonattendance could result in disciplinary action.

Please Note

You should be aware that the centre has a responsibility to report unauthorised absences to your Local Authority or Candidate Finance Direct or your provider/employer that candidates with a significant number of unexplained absences may be reassessed for their entitlement to any candidate loans and grants.

Candidate Disciplinary

The centre operates a Candidate Disciplinary Code, which sets out the procedures to be followed in cases where a candidates conduct or behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable. For further information on this please contact administration.

Disruption to the Work of the centre

The centre reserves the right to exclude any person whose presence or behaviour might affect the normal operation of the centre.

Centre Fees

Any fees or loans, including equipment loans (books, CDs, Dictaphones etc.) must be paid or returned at least 10 working days before the end of the academic year.

If you know you are going to have problems in paying your fees or repaying a loan, make sure you discuss this with the appropriate person. Unless the College has agreed to defer payments, candidates with unpaid debts will be taken to court, and academic penalties will apply.

Safety and Security

If you have any queries related to safety and security issues please contact Administration on 01579 348544.

CCTV

The college takes very seriously the safety and security of its candidates and staff. CCTV is therefore used at various points around sites.

Accidents and injuries

You should report all injuries and accidents to a member of staff as soon as possible. All accidents must be recorded in an Accident Book, a copy of which is kept at each site. Please contact the administration staff.

First Aid

The names of First Aiders are prominently displayed on notice boards in the College reception areas. If in doubt, check with the Office, for more information contact our administrators.

Safety in Workshops

Certain, machinery and apparatus must not be used by candidates, except under staff supervision. If in doubt, check with your tutor.

For certain practical Programmes you may be required to purchase approved protective clothing in the interests of Health and Safety. Some protective clothing may be supplied.

You will be informed of safe working procedures and must comply with these instructions.

The centre cannot accept liability for accidents caused by any disregard of instructions and / or personal negligence.

Emergency Evacuation

You must familiarise yourself with FIRE PROCEDURES, which are prominently displayed in all buildings. Fire Drills are held at regular intervals. On hearing an alarm, or in the event of a fire, you must immediately leave the building in an orderly manner at the nearest prescribed safe exit and wait at one of the emergency refuge areas for further instructions.

Lost Property

Please make sure you do not bring valuable property onto centre sites such as iPods, cameras, expensive phones or large amounts of money unless you really need to. If you do bring money or valuables into centre please keep them with you at all times. Whilst the centre aims to provide a safe and secure environment thefts and losses can occur. The centre can not be held liable for lost or stolen items.

If you find an item that may be someone's lost property please hand it in to the office. Likewise if you lose an item please check with the office in case it has been handed in.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed on centre premises, either within or outside buildings. The only exception to this is the allocated smoking area outside the carpark gates.

Please remember that smoking can damage your health. Your doctor or local health centre can provide you with appropriate advice and referral should you wish to stop smoking.

Alcohol, Drugs or Solvent Abuse

Any candidate on centre premises or who is off-site, but still under the supervision of centre staff and is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or solvents will be dealt with under the centre's Disciplinary Procedure. Any candidate found with unauthorised drugs or solvents on their person will similarly be dealt with under the centre's Disciplinary Procedure and the incident will be reported to the Police.

Any candidate, if caught selling drugs or other illegal substances on centre premises, or while under the supervision of centre staff will automatically be suspended under the gross misconduct clause of the centre's Disciplinary Procedure and the incident will be reported to the police.

Use of IPODs / MP3 players and Mobile Telephones

In order not to interrupt teaching or the learning of fellow candidates, personal radios, stereos or mobile phones must not be used in the following situations or locations:

- In time-tabled sessions;
- Where candidates attend College Committee Meetings;
- Learning Resource Centres (Libraries);
- Open Access Centres (Workshops/Computer Rooms);
- Any time where the use of mobile phones may affect the concentration of others.

Candidates should be aware that the use of mobile phones / IPODs and MP3 players in some areas of the centre may contravene health and safety rules.

Use of Equipment / Books

Apparatus, equipment and books must not be removed from the premises without authorisation.

Candidates may be held responsible for any damage they might cause to centre equipment or property. Charges for damage caused will be assessed by the centre manager.

All equipment / book loans must be returned as agreed. Failure to return items will be treated as a debt to the centre and the actions under the relevant paragraphs on college fees will apply.

Thank you for taking the time to read the handbook.
Enjoy your time being part of SWAAT.