

## Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) Policy for autistic young people accessing Employ Autism (Autism Exchange)

### 1. Purpose and scope

This policy defines the scope of our IAG service to autistic young people and the process we follow to deliver this.

#### Definition of programme

**Employ Autism** provides training, resources and support for employers, to enable paid work experience opportunities for autistic young people. It is a service delivered by Ambitious about Autism.

**The programme formally known as Autism Exchange (AEX)** is now part of the Employ Autism programme. The aim of the programme is to give autistic young people meaningful experiences of paid work and to increase employability skills.

Some opportunities offer free access to Information, Advice and Guidance for autistic young people aged 18-25 years old applying for a work experience opportunity. The individual job adverts will clearly indicate if the application process includes access to IAG. All adverts will include a link to a pdf to show a visual journey of what to expect for applicants. Employers pay a fee to help fund the programme.

### 2. Relevant legal/statutory/regulatory requirements

In delivering this service we comply with GDPR legislation, we follow our Safeguarding policy and comply with the Equality Act 2010

We are committed to ensuring our staff have or are working towards recognised qualifications relevant to their job.

### 3. Key principles

The key principles underpinning this service are that we will:

- Have the autistic young people at the heart of all we do. We listen to them to ensure our service reflects their views and needs
- Provide accurate, impartial, up-to-date information, advice and guidance.
- Offer a flexible and prompt service. We will be responsive with a person-centred approach. We aim to be approachable, helpful, and ensure that professional integrity is embedded in our work.
- Ensure all our staff have, or are working towards, nationally recognised qualifications relevant to their job. We also hold regular supervision or shadowing opportunities for peer-to-peer observations.
- Guarantee all staff have the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of those we work with. They receive safeguarding training during induction, annual refresher training and access to external expert training courses.

Policy Owner	Director of Fundraising and Development	Next Review Date:	25 September 2025
Policy No.	83	Version No.	1.0

- Strive as a service provider and an employer to be equitable, diverse and inclusive in our practice
- Treat everyone fairly, with dignity and respect regardless of gender, colour, ethnicity, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstance, sexual orientation or any other relevant distinction.
- Evaluate our services and seek feedback to ensure we are meeting client needs.
- Deliver information in an accessible format and co-create resources with clients. For example we aim to use simple short sentences in an accessible font and include visuals.
- Only use the information given to us in the way we state which is clearly written on job adverts and in line with our privacy policy.
- We will break confidentiality in line with our Ambitious about Autism Safeguarding policy if we have immediate concerns about a young person's safety or wellbeing.
- Abide by the Data Protection Act 2018 principles and uphold the requirements as stated in the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) regulations.
- Respond to any complaints promptly, professionally and in line with our complaints policy.
- Signpost you to an appropriate alternative service in the event that we cannot provide the required service ourselves.

#### 4. Policy statements

Ambitious About Autism is committed to providing high quality information, advice and guidance services to autistic young people. We will do this through delivery of dedicated programmes, as defined below. In developing these programmes we will consider the offer to autistic young people, as well as their parents and carers. We will resource these programmes based on the needs of the beneficiaries as well as the availability of funding.

Access to the programmes will be granted based on criteria as set out below. We will provide clear information regarding access and 'ways of working' to help ensure the successful delivery of related activity.

##### **What is IAG, what do we offer and who delivers it?**

Below is a full list of the services we provide and the team members delivering them. Individuals can access services relevant to their requirements.

##### The team

- Administrator - They are the first point of contact for autistic young people enquiring about the programme or applying for paid work opportunities.
- IAG officers - They support and enable autistic young people to apply for work experience placements, identify adjustments and prepare them for the workplace.
- Careers Advisors - They offer impartial, client centred, careers development and guidance.
- Programme Manager - They provide expertise to employers to enable autistic young people to have a positive experience in the workplace and to promote inclusive workplaces. They manage the service.

Policy Owner	Director of Fundraising and Development	Next Review Date:	25 September 2025
Policy No.	83	Version No.	1.0

**What is Information** – this means the provision of information that is factual without any discussion about the relative merits of the options. This is provided to autistic young people, and their parents and carers with impartiality.

**What we offer autistic young people**

- [Ambitious about Autism website](#)
- Videos include subtitles
- Work experience opportunity adverts and job descriptions
- Employ Autism Network
- Employability toolkits
- Application journey booklet
- Recruitment journey visual
- One-page profiles
- Case studies and blogs
- Ambitious youth network and alumni network
- Leaflets
- Live events
- Email correspondence

**What we offer parents and carers**

- [Ambitious about Autism website](#)
- Videos include subtitles
- Work experience opportunity adverts and job descriptions
- Employability toolkits
- Application journey booklet
- Recruitment journey visual
- Case studies and blogs
- Leaflets
- Live events
- Email correspondence

**Who delivers this?**

Administrator, IAG officers, Careers Advisors, Programme Manager.

**What is Advice** - Advice may be given to a client that provides more information about their situation. It may require a recommendation or explanation based on the person’s experience and knowledge and it is important that it is as accurate as possible. This is provided to autistic young people

**What we offer**

- Application feedback
- Pre-booked 1:1 meeting
- Email correspondence – we aim to respond within 2 working days
- Phone enquiries
- Placement meetings (pre/during/post)
- Feedback to applicants from Employers
- Application feedback
- Candidate profile
- Practice interviews

Policy Owner	Director of Fundraising and Development	Next Review Date:	25 September 2025
Policy No.	83	Version No.	1.0

- Placement meetings (pre/during/post)
- Workshops
- Live events
- Referral to other AaA service and external organisations
- Advocating on behalf of the autistic young person to the employer

**Who delivers this?**

IAG officers, Careers Advisors and Programme Manager.

**What is Guidance** - It is commonly known as the act of providing direction. It is delivered by an experienced, qualified careers advisors or staff working towards a level 6 careers development qualification.

Careers advisors understand careers theories, methods and reflective practice is embedded in their work. They are member of the professional body Careers Development Institute (CDI). The CDI [Code of Ethics](#) principles are embedded into the practice.

This is offered to autistic young people.

**What we offer**

- Careers Meeting

**Who delivers this**

Careers Advisors

**How we deliver 1:1 meetings**

- Online meetings via MS teams or Zoom
- Telephone call meetings
- In person at Pears National Centre (we cannot offer home visits or meet in person outside of Pears National Centre)

**Who is eligible to access IAG service?**

Any of the following people are eligible to access these services:

- Autistic young person applying for placements who have completed an online registration form
- Autistic young person who has applied for an opportunity but not been offered a role
- Autistic young person on a placement and after their placement
- Parents and carers supporting their autistic young person apply for roles

**Guidelines for people who engage with our service**

- Treat us with respect
- If you have a meeting with us please aim to arrive on time. We will wait for 10 minutes and then leave the meeting. We will send a follow up email so you can rebook
- Please do not swear or use offensive language.

Policy Owner	Director of Fundraising and Development	Next Review Date:	25 September 2025
Policy No.	83	Version No.	1.0

If you break these rules intentionally, we will give you a written warning via email. If you continue to break these guidelines, we reserve the right to suspend our service to you for 12 months.

Evaluation is important to us as we use it to improve our service. You will be invited to participate in our evaluation while using our service at different points of interactions.

If you have feedback on the service we provide please follow this [link](#).

We aim to respond to emails and feedback within 2 working days.

#### **Other policies to be referred to**

Adult at risk safeguarding policy and procedure

Compliments and Complaints policy

Data Protection policy

Risk Assessment

Code of Conduct

Social media and community guidelines

Confidentiality policy

#### **5. Review of this policy**

This policy will be reviewed every three years by Director of Fundraising and Development, in line with the organisational strategy.

Revised: (15 September 2022)

Approved: (15 September 2022)

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