

# ACL Learner Handbook

## 2021 - 2022



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## WELCOME

Lifelong learning matters to us - we want to make a difference to people's lives. ACL Essex is not just about second chances; it's about third, fourth, fifth and sixth chances. In fact, it is about helping you achieve the goals you have set your sights on, throughout your life. But it is much more than skills and qualifications, crucial as they are, it is also about making sure you flourish; your health and wellbeing, your sense of community belonging, and your confidence and belief in yourself.

We aim to provide you with as many ways to flourish as possible. We are there in communities across Essex, to make a difference to residents and businesses, so everyone has the chance to make a difference for themselves and to the places that they live in.

Whatever your ambitions for learning might be, we will be there to support you on your journey

Best wishes  
Katherine Burns  
ACL Principal

## TERM DATES

### **Autumn Term 2021**

Starts: 2 August 2021  
Half term: 25 to 29 October 2021  
Ends: 17 December 2021

### **Spring Term 2022**

Starts: 4 January 2022  
Half term: 14 to 18 February 2022  
Ends: 1 April 2022

### **Summer Term 2022**

Starts: 19 April 2022  
Half term: 30 May to 3 June 2022  
End date may be subject to change.

Please note:

The end date will vary according to the length of the course you enrol on and some courses may run outside of these dates

## ACL LEARNER CHARTER

The aim of this charter is to improve support, communication, and strengthen relationships, creating a safe and positive environment for all.

<b>Respect</b>	<b>Engagement</b>
<p><b>Respect other people regardless of any differences.</b></p> <p><b>Behave in a way that makes our centres safe.</b></p> <p><b>Don't use language that others may find unkind, discriminatory or offensive.</b></p> <p><b>Follow the ACL netiquette when working online</b></p>	<p><b>Complete work on time and to the best of your ability.</b></p> <p><b>Attend your class on time informing us if you are unable to attend.</b></p> <p><b>Celebrate your achievements and those of others.</b></p>
<b>Support</b>	<b>Communication</b>
<p><b>Always wear your ID badge.</b></p> <p><b>Share with us by completing a Learner Welfare form if you need to.</b></p> <p><b>Help us improve our service by providing feedback</b></p> <p><b>Request and make use of available Learning Support if needed.</b></p>	<p><b>Report concerns about abuse to staff or the safeguarding team.</b></p> <p><b>Keep us informed of any changes in your personal details.</b></p> <p><b>Discuss your progress and goals with staff.</b></p> <p><b>Tell us what you would like to do next.</b></p>

## ACL COVID SAFETY

**At ACL we have made sure we have complied with the Governments guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19.**

**Our website will include any updated guidance to this document.**

**Our safety plan includes:**

1. We have carried out a COVID-19 Risk Assessment and shared with those who work for ACL.
2. All staff have completed a COVID-19 Safety course as part of Essex County Council policy, as well as an ACL induction on safety measures.
3. We have a Track and trace recording process in place for visitors, staff, contractors and family/carers.
4. We have cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures in line with guidance.
  - We are cleaning high touch areas throughout the day and cleaning classrooms between lessons.
  - There are sanitising stations at the entrance and exits of all buildings, near toilet facilities and high touch areas.
  - There is a sanitising station in every classroom.
5. We have taken all reasonable steps to help people work safely from a COVID-19 secure workplace or work from home.
  - Many of our courses are now being delivered online using the latest digital teaching methods.
  - Staff will continue to work from home, where possible. This means you may see less staff around, however, we are working hard to ensure your experience with us remains positive.
6. We have taken all reasonable steps to maintain a 2-metre distance in the workplace.
  - Classes will have staggered start and break times to reduce the amount of people moving around the building at any one time.
  - We have implemented one-way routes through all buildings with clear signage giving directions.
  - All classrooms have been set out so 2m distancing can be maintained.
7. Where people cannot keep 2m apart we have ensured a least 1m distance and taken all the mitigating actions possible to manage transmission risk.
  - There are protective screens in areas such as Reception to protect the customer and the member of staff.
  - Toilet facilities have been reduced, please be patient if you are asked to wait for some to become available.

## When entering an ACL Building, please:

1. If you believe you may have any of the Covid-19 symptoms, please do not attend. You will need to self isolate and arrange for a test. Details can be found on: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
2. Please do not enter the building until 5 minutes before your lesson or appointment is due to start.
3. If you are staff, a visitor, contractor or family/carer for a learner, please sign in at Reception for Track and Trace reasons. If Reception is closed, please use the visitors book leaving you name, reason for visit, who visiting and contact number. **Learners do not need to sign in at reception as you will be recorded at attending by the tutor using the e-register.**
4. Please ensure that you have either your ACL Security Badge displayed, or a visitors' badge.
5. When in the building please always maintain a 2-metre distance from other people .
6. Please follow the one-way routes that have been set out. There are markers to guide you around the building. You may have to exit the building and enter through another entrance to access certain parts of the building.
7. Government guidance is that masks should be worn in enclosed public spaces. This means that masks are to be worn whilst walking around our centres. However, once seated in the classroom and provided 2 metre social distancing is being maintained masks can be removed during the lesson.
8. Please ensure that reusable face masks are clean on entering the building or disposable ones are fresh new masks. Please take disposable masks with you when you leave and dispose of properly.
9. Please ensure you have visited the toilet before coming to the centre, our toilet provision has had to be reduced due to social distancing guidance. There are instructions outside toilet facilities advising you how to use safely.
10. Please cleanse your hands on entering and leaving the building with the provided sanitizer.
11. If you use computer equipment in your lesson, you are welcome to bring your own. This must be a USB connecting keyboard and / or mouse which can be connected to our desktop computers. Please ensure these have been cleaned before leaving home. We will have our own available but using your own, could reduce the risk of indirect contamination.
12. If you require use of a mouse mat and/or wrist rest, please bring your own that have been cleaned before entering the building. We will have some available but to avoid indirect contamination, it would be better if you could use your own.
13. Please bring in minimal personal items.
14. Please bring in your own water. If using a refillable bottle, please fill at home. Paper cups are available but are for single use only.

15. When in the building, please wash or sanitise your hands regularly at the sanitising stations present throughout the centre.
16. After the lesson has finished, please leave the building promptly.

## ACL CONTACT DETAILS

By telephone:	0345 603 7635
By email:	<a href="mailto:lifelong.learning@essex.gov.uk">lifelong.learning@essex.gov.uk</a>
Visit our website:	<a href="http://www.aclessex.com">www.aclessex.com</a>
By letter:	Adult Community Learning, Spinks Lane, Witham, Essex CM8 1EP
Online Feedback Form	<a href="https://essex-self.achieveservice.com/service/Complaints_and_compliments">https://essex-self.achieveservice.com/service/Complaints_and_compliments</a>

## HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK TO ACL - COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

In the first instance please speak with your tutor and if you would like to make further contact please use the Online feedback form above or use the contact details above.

- We treat all feedback seriously and according to our standard procedures
- We recognise and respond to compliments, ensuring that staff teams and individuals are recognised when excellent service is delivered.
- The customer can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times. We expect that customers also treat ACL staff dealing with complaints with the same courtesy, respect and fairness
- All complaints will be acknowledged within **three working days** from the date of receipt.
- We will respond to a complaint within **10 working days** and within 20 working days for other comments or compliments.

## CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

By carefully monitoring our service quality, we ensure that we are giving you the best possible value for money. Each year we develop a service quality improvement plan which is reviewed regularly to monitor our performance; including an annual self-assessment report which involves feedback from learners and other service users. This feedback is collected through learner end of course evaluations, learner focus groups and National Surveys. All of which helps to inform us on how we can further develop our service and improve your learning experience with ACL.

## START AND END OF COURSE SURVEYS

### [Start of Course Questionnaire](#)

<https://forms.office.com/r/GhiNPb0FA8>

### [End of Course Questionnaire](#)

<https://forms.office.com/r/GmPx2KvkJD>

### [Start Of course Questionnaire - Easy Read](#)

<https://forms.office.com/r/E6shTbgXRW>

### [End of Course Questionnaire – Easy Read](#)

<https://forms.office.com/r/eYqNvYFUWj>

### [Start Of course Questionnaire – ESOL](#)

<https://forms.office.com/r/XNN49jZb66>

### [End of Course Questionnaire - ESOL](#)

<https://forms.office.com/r/DGG0SEJuK8>

Completing these forms will record how your skills develop whilst you are on your course.

As well as gaining a qualification many learners find they increase other skills such as increased confidence, use of digital technology, communication skills. Being able to recognise these can help when deciding what to do next.

How do we use this information?

We use this to:

- share with you your wider learning at ACL
- evidence the benefits of learning with ACL
- identify and plan and future courses in ACL

We also use the end of course questionnaire to gain your feedback on the quality of your learning experience with ACL so that we can continue to improve our service.

Thank you for completing these forms.



## ACL LEARNER FORUM

If you are a learner enrolled on a course with Adult Learning, or an employer involved with ACL then you can apply. We are looking for members who reflect the diversity of our learner group. So, whatever your age or experience we'd really like to hear from you.

The Learner Forum is the best opportunity for our learners to share their ideas about what ACL is doing well, how we can improve and what new things we should be thinking about.

### **What will the Learner Forum do?**

- Provide opportunities for learners to make suggestions of what could go into learning programmes
- Enable learners to meet and share experiences and ideas with other learners, and with staff
- Enable learners to express their concerns and ensure that Adult Learning responds appropriately to the issues that are raised
- Help ensure accessibility by road testing evaluation forms, systems and changes in policy etc.
- Provide an ongoing consultation role for ACL staff and our Governing Body.

### **How often does the forum meet?**

As a member of the Forum you would be expected to attend up to four meetings during the year. Whilst our centres have limited opening these meetings will be held online via MS Teams. As a learner we can provide you with Office 365 to access this on your own devices.

### **Who attends the meetings?**

In addition to Learner Forum members, meetings are attended as needed by members of the leadership teams and other ACL staff, depending on the meeting agenda.

### **What are the benefits of forum membership?**

Taking part in a learner forum is a great way to develop confidence, organisational, and communication skills. It is a voluntary role, and experience as a forum member will enhance your CV. Additionally, you will be able to make a positive contribution to the development of ACL's service.

### **How do I join?**

If you are interested in joining the ACL Learner Forum or require further information please email [jill.newton2@essex.gov.uk](mailto:jill.newton2@essex.gov.uk), call 03330 138366, or email [aclearnerforuminbox@essexacl.ac.uk](mailto:aclearnerforuminbox@essexacl.ac.uk)

## NEW COURSE IDEAS

Do you have an idea for a new course? If so, we'd really like to hear from you. You can speak to any of our frontline staff or you can write your ideas on our Ideas Wall at some of our centres. Please ask at Customer Services.

## LEARNER ID CARDS

ACL Essex strives to provide a safe and secure environment for all who visit its premises. A key aspect of discharging this responsibility is to have an effective way of controlling and monitoring who is on ACL premises with a card identification system.

- All staff are required to wear a blue, staff lanyard with an ECC ID photo card.
- All visitors are required to wear a red, visitor lanyard with a Visitor's ID badge which they are given when they sign in at Customer Services.

All learners are issued with an ID badge and green lanyard by Customer Services during their first session when enrolled on courses for more than one day. ID cards must be worn at all times by learners. Anyone who forgets their ID card will be asked to obtain a Visitors pass from Customer Services. If attending a course that is one day or less, they will be required to wear a visitors' badge.

## ACCESS TO FACILITIES

We will make every effort to ensure our buildings are accessible to all and we will seek to influence and encourage owners of other buildings that we hire to do likewise. We make all reasonable adjustment to facilitate access for wheelchair users and those with restricted mobility or sensory impairment however if you have any concerns about accessing any of our buildings please contact us on 0345 603 7635

## FIRE SAFETY

In the event of the fire bells ringing, all persons within the building must leave immediately and congregate in the designated assembly area.

If you have difficulty with mobility that affects access a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) will be discussed and offered to you by your tutor.

Fire alarms, extinguishers and fire signs are provided to ensure safety. It is the responsibility of all users to ensure that such equipment remains in good working order. The discovery of defective firefighting or warning equipment must be reported immediately to reception.

It is a legal requirement that designated fire doors are not wedged open and that their self-closing mechanisms are not tampered with in any way.

## BAD WEATHER

In the event of extreme weather and the need to close the college please check the following:

[www.facebook.com/aclessex](http://www.facebook.com/aclessex)

[www.aclessex.com](http://www.aclessex.com)

Where possible we will also send details of our closed centres to BBC Radio Essex, which could be read out on air.

[www.bbc.co.uk/bbcessex](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcessex)

**Snow during the day** – In the event of very heavy snow & ice during the day, ACL may take the decision to close early. There are usually warnings on the news and radio if bad weather is expected.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Neither ACL Essex nor Essex County Council will accept responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property including cars parked on the premises.

## CAR PARKING

We have car parking at most of our main centres. Please contact the appropriate reception for details. Sometimes our car parks become very busy and we ask that learners are patient and tolerant of others at these times. Individuals should not become abusive to staff or other learners.

## REFRESHMENTS

At some of our centre's snacks, hot and cold drinks are available. These may sometimes be limited to service from machines and as such there may at times be very limited availability

## ACCESS TO LEARNING SUPPORT

We are committed to supporting all learners. If you have particular needs, we hope to that you will tell us. We invite you to do this at enrolment or you can talk to us at any stage of your programme. We will agree a support plan with you to ensure that you have a successful learning experience with us.

We provide support for people with disabilities and /or learning difficulties, for example visual impairment and mental health difficulty.

It is important for us to know as much about your individual needs as soon as is possible, this includes any support you may require while undertaking exams, in line with Awarding Organisation requirements, where possible.

### **Types of support we can offer you include:**

- Note takers or tape-recorded notes if you have any difficulty in taking notes
- British Sign Language Communication support
- Assistive hearing devices if you have a hearing impairment
- Reading or other support for certain examinations, where possible
- One-to-one tuition in certain circumstances or additional teaching
- Study skills support if you have not undertaken formal learning for a while
- Specialist assistive or enabling software and resources

If you would like to speak to a member of the Learning Support team in confidence, please give your contact details to a member of the Customer Services team or call the appropriate telephone number below.

Area	Learning Support Coordinator	Telephone
Clacton, Harwich, Colchester	Joanna Rice	03330139205
Uttlesford, Harlow, Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rayleigh	Tracey Lang	03330138647
Witham, Braintree, Maldon, Chelmsford	Nicola Burwood	03330134958

## ALTERNATIVE INFORMATION FORMATS

We are able to provide information in formats other than those immediately available. This may include large print, audiocassette or Braille. We can also make information available to be read with assistive software if required. Please ask your tutor or at reception if you require this service.

## LEARNER WELLBEING

We care about your wellbeing; we have a Learner Welfare form that we suggest you complete when you have personal information related to your health that could affect you in the centre or might make you more vulnerable. This information is kept securely and only shared with your tutors and the safeguarding team, although in the event of a Safeguarding or Prevent concern information may also be shared with additional third parties.

Access the “Your Wellbeing” area for the Learner Welfare Form [Info: My Wellbeing \(essex.ac.uk\)](https://www.essex.ac.uk/learning-support/my-wellbeing)

We also have a wellbeing area on our website where we provide information and guidance to signpost you to other services and organisations that can support you. This includes digital wellbeing.

## SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT

ACL takes its responsibility to safeguard all learners and staff seriously. It is recognised that any adults/young people could potentially be the victim of abuse including radicalisation and the service operates the following policies to address these risks.

- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Children and Young People safeguarding Policy
- Harassment and Bullying policy
- Fitness to Learn Policy
- Computer Use Policy
- Online Learning Policy
- Digital Recording of Sessions Policy

Safeguarding and Prevent is the responsibility of us all. It is about protecting those who may be vulnerable from a wide range of harm and ensuring that they feel safe. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, bullying, including cyber bullying, as well as a range of wider issues including Prevent, which is the Government's strategy to wipe out radicalisation.

Safeguarding is only effective when we all take responsibility for looking out for each other.

If you have concerns, or someone has disclosed abuse to you, speak to your tutor, a member of staff or contact the ACL Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jill Newton on **07788 301629** or email [jill.newton2@essex.gov.uk](mailto:jill.newton2@essex.gov.uk) Alternatively complete a safeguarding concern form

[https://essex-self.achieveservice.com/service/Adult\\_Community\\_Learning\\_\\_\\_Learner\\_safeguarding](https://essex-self.achieveservice.com/service/Adult_Community_Learning___Learner_safeguarding)

## BRITISH VALUES

Part of the Government's Prevent agenda is British Values.

ACL promotes the British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We do this through encouraging the development of skills and attributes that enable us to contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

A short video illustrating this will be shown to you by your tutor at the start of your course

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- We are committed to fairness and equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all learners and potential learners.
- We oppose discrimination in any form and have a commitment to making our courses inclusive and available to all.
- We positively welcome enrolments from everyone, regardless of age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation. When appropriate and possible we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure all learners gain the most from their learning experience.

## REMOTE LEARNING/LEARNING ONLINE

Remote learning takes place when a learner and member of staff giving instruction are not in the same place and the learning session is instead delivered through downloading information, telephone calls, webinars, or live streaming. This may be a part of curriculum design or as part of a response to ACL closure arrangements.

### ONLINE LEARNING GUIDELINES

- Be on time. Sessions will start and finish according to the timetable. If you join late, please don't interrupt the session. Remain silent. Your tutor will support you.
- Be prepared. Come to the meeting with a positive attitude and with any course materials or resources that you have been asked to have ready.
- Where possible, choose a quiet location – away from pets, children, etc. Turn off the TV and any music.
- Be ready to take part. Not everybody is confident in speaking up within a group, especially when you don't already know other learners. However, to make the most of your learning experience we ask that you share ideas, ask questions, and contribute to the discussions.

### SECURITY

- Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.
- Don't share your password with anyone.
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it.
- Only share an email address or other personal information if necessary.
- If using a webcam, think about what is behind you in view – is it something you don't want others to see?

### WHEN COMMUNICATING ONLINE YOU SHOULD ALWAYS:

- Be respectful of others and their opinions.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and others').
- Beware of using reply all – does everyone need to see your message?
- Remember to stay on topic. Is this relevant to your subject?
- Remember to listen and not talk over each other – this comes with practice! Mute yourself when not talking.
- The site's owners and moderators have the final say in enforcing the rules.
- Please do not write or say anything that you wouldn't say to someone's face and always think about how you would feel if you were receiving it.

- Please remember we still need to keep each other safe. If you are concerned about your own or another person's safety, please tell your tutor or report it using the Safeguarding number.

Adapted from:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/guides/about-netiquette>

[http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-](http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf)

[content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf](http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf)

### **Working Safely with Display Screen Equipment (DSE)**

While preparing and/or participating in distance learning learners are responsible for looking after their own health. This includes ensuring they have adequate arrangements in place to maintain good posture and reduce Display Screen Equipment (DSE) related risks.

### **Staying Safe Online**

Learners are recommended to read the advice and information for families and individuals on the National Cyber Security Centre website <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk>. This includes top tips for staying safe online and how to protect your data and devices.

## THE ACL NETIQUETTE

It is important to recognise that the online classroom is in fact a classroom and certain behaviours are expected when you communicate with those engaging with you. These guidelines are known as netiquette.

1. Treat your online space like you would your classroom.
2. Arrive on time, be prepared, and ready to take part.
3. Be prepared to be visible, think about how you present yourself and what is around you.
4. Be respectful of others and their opinions.
5. Listen to others, and don't talk over them.
6. If you can, choose somewhere quiet to learn.
7. Beware of using reply all when using email.
8. Do not use offensive language
9. Don't write or say something that you would not say in person.
10. Remember we need to keep each other safe. If you are concerned about your own or another person's safety report it immediately to a member of staff or by calling 0788 301629

## KEEPING SAFE ONLINE

You will find lots of information on our VLE and Website about keeping safe online.

### Some golden rules

- Don't give out personal information such as your address or phone number
- Don't send pictures of yourself to anyone especially indecent pictures
- Don't open emails or attachments from people you don't know
- Never arrange to meet somebody in person that you have met online
- If anything you read or see online worries you, tell someone about it

## VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE)

ACL Essex has its own Virtual Learning Environment where learners can access information and resources related to their subject at any time–

<https://vle.essexacl.ac.uk/>

All learners are given a VLE account when they enrol with ACL Essex. Your account details are:

Username: your [firstname.surname@essexacl.ac.uk](mailto:firstname.surname@essexacl.ac.uk) (e.g. [mary.smith@essexacl.ac.uk](mailto:mary.smith@essexacl.ac.uk)) all lower case Password: Learn200

Click 'sign in' to log on. This will take you to a Microsoft Sign in screen where you will change your password. These are your log in details for the VLE and also Office 365 for the duration of your course.

If your tutor has set up a course on the VLE to support your classroom course, they will give you the enrolment key you need to access it. To find your course, click on the 'ACL Courses' image and either search for your course by name or click on your subject area. Once you are logged in, this will appear in 'my courses'. There are lots of other resources which you might find useful to support your learning with ACL. Click on the **Information** tab at the top of the screen to find out more.

If you need further help, please view our [video and written tutorials](#) or contact [acltechsupport@essex.gov.uk](mailto:acltechsupport@essex.gov.uk)

## OFFICE 365 (INCLUDING TEAMS)

As a learner with ACL Essex, you are given access to Office 365 for education. This gives you access to online versions of Microsoft's suite including Word, PowerPoint and Teams.

Your tutor may use Teams as your learning platform.

To access go to <https://www.office.com/>. Your account details are:

Username: [firstname.surname@essexacl.ac.uk](mailto:firstname.surname@essexacl.ac.uk)

Password: Learn200. You will be asked to change this to something more memorable.



Please note, your access to ACL Essex's 365 account will be suspended two months after your class ends.

If you need further help, please [view our video and written tutorials](#) or contact [acletechsupport@essex.gov.uk](mailto:acletechsupport@essex.gov.uk)

## OUR WEBSITE

There is 24 hour access to our website [www.aclessex.com](http://www.aclessex.com) where you can find local contact details for your area. Information also available via Facebook [www.facebook.com/ACLEssex](http://www.facebook.com/ACLEssex) and Twitter <https://twitter.com/ACLEssex>.

## WIFI

We encourage you to bring your own device (smartphone, tablet, laptop) to your class to support your learning. You can access our free Wi-Fi by asking Customer Services or your tutor for the password.

## NEED SUPPORT WITH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES?

To help you develop your skills and confidence using digital technology we have computers in the public areas at most of our centres. We also offer specially designed courses aiming to support you through the initial stages of using digital technologies. Please speak to your tutor or ask at reception for further details.

## LOOKING FOR WORK?

As well as offering a wide range of vocational courses to help you progress your career, ACL can support you with the tools to find work, and develop skills that will enhance your CV.

If you would like to know more, please speak to your tutor or a member of our customer services team on the front desk.

## MAKING CHOICES ABOUT FUTURE LEARNING OR CAREER DEVELOPMENT.

ACL Essex is Matrix Accredited and works within this quality framework to support learners in making informed decisions about future learning and careers options. The matrix Standard is the national quality standard for any organisation that delivers information, advice and guidance on learning and work.

### **We provide information on learning and work in the following ways:**

- printed materials such as leaflets, course information booklets, learner handbook
- Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) <https://vle.essexacl.ac.uk/>
- Student Services staff

### **We provide advice and courses on a range of topics:**

- ways to search for and apply for jobs, e.g. interview skills, CV workshop, completing applications forms, basic IT skills
- help link your personal interests and skills to your job or career
- Identify courses suitable for you
- give advice on ways to progress in a career
- identify the skills you may need and refer you to other support (if necessary)
- give advice about financial support for learning

**We can arrange guidance for further support options.**

A guidance interview will help you find out more about your options. It is private, confidential, impartial, and free of charge. Guidance provision is delivered by a qualified Learning Guide from our partner organisation the National Careers Service.

The National Careers Service (NCS) supports access to personalised skills and careers information that helps individuals to make effective choices about their future pathways. This service is **free** and friendly, tailoring impartial information, skills and careers advice to meet individual needs.

Professionally qualified advisors from the National Careers Service provide confidential face to face or telephone appointments helping you to find learning and training that is right for you. Advisors can help you take the next step in gaining employability skills or in planning a route into a new career.

Contact them using the following details.

For Colchester, Witham and Braintree call 01206 814292/07932579483 or email [sandra.jones@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:sandra.jones@colchester.ac.uk)

For Clacton and Harwich call 01206 712825/07932579290 or email [jan.dennis@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:jan.dennis@colchester.ac.uk)

For all other areas in Essex call 0800 917 94 19 or email [NationalCareersServiceNCC@futuresforyou.com](mailto:NationalCareersServiceNCC@futuresforyou.com)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

ACL operates within the Essex County Council Health and Safety Policy, the ACL Learner Charter, and Essex County Council Corporate Health and Safety guidelines. Copies of the ACL Code of Practice are available at each centre as well as online via the ACL virtual learning environment. The Service will ensure that there is an awareness of safety issues among all staff and, so far as it is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of non-employees who may be affected by its work activities are not endangered. Our learners have a role in this, and we would ask you to please be alert to potential risks and report anything you think could be a danger straight away to the reception staff or your tutor.

As part of your learning experience we will include guidance as to:

- |   |
|---|
| • the importance of health and safety   |
| • how hazards are identified, and risks assessed                              |
| • how to play an active part in developing a set of safe behaviours,          |
| • how to acquire practical, transferable skills from your learning experience |

Health and Safety will be covered as part of your induction to the course and by the end of your first class you should be clear about:

- |  |
|--|
| • emergency arrangements   |
| • any significant risks that may affect you  |
| • control measures for the risks   |
| • supervision arrangements and the contact person for any health and safety concerns |
| • any restrictions or prohibitions that apply in the learning situation and premises |
| • any personal protective equipment or clothing that you must wear                   |
| • accident reporting   |
| • any health and safety rules (“dos” and “don’ts”).                                  |

## GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

### Data Protection

Your personal information is used by the DfE to exercise its functions and to meet its statutory responsibilities, including under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and to create and maintain a unique learner number (ULN) and a personal learning record (PLR). Your information will be securely destroyed after it is no longer required for these purposes.

Your information may be shared with third parties for education, training, employment and well-being related purposes, including for research. This will only take place where the law allows it and the sharing is in compliance with data protection legislation.

The English European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority (or agents acting on its behalf) may contact you in order for them to carry out research and evaluation to inform the effectiveness of training.

Further information about use of and access to your personal data, details of organisations with whom we regularly share data, information about how long we retain your data, and how to change your consent to being contacted, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-privacy-notice>

## PLAGIARISM

If you are studying an accredited programme, there may be varied forms of assessment. Usually assessment will involve the production of written work (coursework). Your tutor will provide guidance about the format, style and content of the written assessment, including advice on how to use written sources (i.e. information from books, periodicals, articles, the internet etc.). It is very important not to copy sections of any written source that you use and pass it off as your own work. This is called “plagiarism”.

Plagiarism involves taking someone else’s words, thoughts or ideas and trying to pass them off as your own. It is a form of cheating which is taken very seriously.

Don’t think you won’t be caught; there are many ways to detect plagiarism.

- Markers can spot changes in the style of writing and use of language.
- Markers are highly experienced subject specialists who are very familiar with work on the topic concerned – they may have read the source you are using, (or even marked the essay you have copied from).
- Internet search engines and specialised computer software can be used to match phrases or pieces of text with original sources and to detect changes in the grammar and style of writing or punctuation.

If your work is submitted and it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, one of the following penalties will be applied:

- The piece of work will be awarded zero marks
- You will be disqualified from that unit for the examination series in question
- You will be disqualified from the whole subject for that examination series
- You will be disqualified from all subjects and barred from entering again for a period of time.
- If you have copied from another learner, they may also have the above penalties applied.

Your awarding body will decide which penalty is appropriate.

## **REMEMBER IT’S YOUR QUALIFICATION SO IT NEEDS TO BE YOUR OWN WORK**

## HELP WITH COURSE FEES

The Government identifies priority programmes which may be free to eligible learners.

The ACL website: <http://www.aclessex.com> provides you with more information about the programmes that are free to eligible learners.

ACL Essex is committed to supporting learners wherever possible, and for the academic year 2021-2022, we are providing a small Learner Support Fund to help those on low incomes with the costs of course fees, childcare, materials or resources needed to complete examination or accredited courses.

A Bursary Fund is available for those attending non-accredited courses. This fund is limited and only available to those who are not already entitled to a fee remission. You will be asked to provide some evidence so that your application for support can be assessed.

You can book and pay for some courses via the internet at [www.aclessex.com](http://www.aclessex.com) and this will require full payment at the time of booking. Alternatively, fees can be paid by telephoning **0345 603 7635**, or by post, or in person at one of our centres. You can pay your fees in full by cheque, credit/debit card or cash.

If you are eligible for free tuition fees as a result of meeting the necessary criteria, your booking will be made on receipt of the relevant proof of entitlement documents. Direct Debit payments are available to help manage the cost of learning and, in exceptional circumstances; individual payment plans can be arranged.

Please note that no further course bookings can be taken until all outstanding payments have been made.

**If you think you may be eligible for further help with fees or you have any other questions regarding our fee policy, please contact us on 0345 603 7635.**

## ACL ESSEX - REFUND/CANCELLATION POLICY

Refund of course fees will only be made in exceptional circumstances, such as ill health. Any request for a refund is required in writing and should be directed to the Senior Management Team for approval. If a written request is not received no consideration will be made for issuing a refund. If a refund is agreed, it will be pro-rata based and subject to deduction of a £25 administration fee. Any ancillary costs such as exam fees will not be refunded.

### **A refund of course fees made will be made on the following basis:**

- If ACL Essex cancels a course before it is due to start – Full Refund
- If ACL Essex cancels a course after it has started – Full Refund

### **What if I cancel my enrolment within at least 10 working days before the course begins?**

Refund of fees allowed, however an administration fee of £25 applies which will not be refunded.

### **What if I need to cancel my enrolment after the 10 day period has elapsed?**

Refund requests for courses received less than 10 working days before commencement will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. In exceptional circumstances, at our discretion, once courses have started refunds or a credit note may be considered. All requests for refunds should be made within two weeks of your last attendance. Please note that course fees include an administration charge of £25 which will not be refunded.

### **What if I find the course I have chosen is unsuitable when I turn up to the first session?**

An alternative will be offered, if available, or you can have a full refund of tuition fees (less an administration fee of £25.00) provided we are notified in writing within one week of the course starting. Transfers are limited to one per enrolment within the first week of the course. Any additional transfers will be subject to a £10.00 administrative charge per transfer.

### **What if I opted to pay by direct debit, 19+ learning loan or instalments?**

Learners deciding not to return to the course and who have paid by direct debits, 19+ loan or instalment payment arrangements, are still liable for payment of the full course fees. Fees that remain outstanding will be invoiced to students by ECC finance.

## COURSE DOCUMENTATION

These are the forms we ask you to complete and the purpose of each one:

Learning Agreement	<p>To record your details on our computer system and so that we can contact you.</p> <p>As ACL courses are either fully funded or subsidised by the ESFA this form ensures we have the required information to claim the funding for your course. Without your agreement on this form, we cannot claim the funding.</p>
Start and End of Course Questionnaires	<p>These forms, completed at the start and end of your learning capture your wider development on a course. As well as accreditation learners often find they increase “softer” skills such as confidence, use of digital technology, communication skills etc.</p> <p>For our funders this provides evidence of the impact their funding is having and what good is happening as a result of our learning programmes. We ask all learners to complete these forms.</p>
Individual Learning Plan (ILP)/ Sketchbook	<p>To help you plan your learning and recognise our progress and achievement. Learners have told us, and research shows that getting written feedback on how you are progressing can be extremely helpful. We want your course to meet your individual needs. An ILP is a valuable working document to help you plan your learning with your tutor. It also provides evidence for the funding bodies of the many benefits you gain from your learning. Additionally, it provides you with a summary of the learning outcomes you have completed. This gives you a useful record of your achievements if you are aiming to progress to a further course, employment or voluntary work.</p>
Learner Support Fund/bursary fund application	<p>If you are applying for financial help or additional learning support: We are required to do this for funding and ESFA audit purposes.</p>
Learning Support Plan	<p>This identifies the support we have agreed with you and is required for funding and ESFA audit purposes.</p>
Learner Welfare form and Safeguarding Risk Assessment	<p>At the start of your programme with us we offer all learners the opportunity to complete a Learner Welfare form; your tutor will provide this. If you do feel that you are vulnerable and would like us to know more about you in order to support you, then your tutor will help you to complete the rest of the form. This will then be stored confidentially, and the information only used if needed.</p>



## ACL VENUES

<p><b>ACL Basildon</b> Lifelong Learning Centre Churchill Avenue Broadmayne Basildon SS14 3SG <b>Parking:</b> Adjacent to centre but parking cannot be guaranteed.</p>	<p><b>ACL Clacton</b> St Osyth Road Clacton-on-Sea CO15 3BN <b>Parking:</b> Public parking is available adjacent to the centre</p>
<p><b>ACL Maldon</b> White Horse Lane Maldon CM9 5FW <b>Parking:</b> Parking is in the adjacent pay and display car park. Disabled parking can be booked with reception.</p>	<p><b>ACL Witham</b> Spinks Lane Witham CM8 1EP <b>Parking:</b> Limited parking is available at this centre but cannot be guaranteed.</p>
<p><b>ACL Brentwood</b> Bishops Hill Rayleigh Road Hutton Brentwood CM13 1BD <b>Parking:</b> Adjacent to centre but parking cannot be guaranteed.</p>	<p><b>ACL Colchester</b> Wilson Marriage Barrack Street Colchester CO1 2LR <b>Parking:</b> Limited on-site parking but a car parking space can't be guaranteed.</p>
<p><b>ACL Rayleigh</b> 132/4 High Street Rayleigh SS6 7BX <b>Parking:</b> There is no parking at this venue. A car park is available in the town centre.</p>	<p><b>ACL Chelmsford</b> Beeches Close Chelmsford CM1 2SB <b>Parking:</b> Limited car parking is available on site, but a parking space can't be guaranteed.</p>
<p><b>ACL Harlow</b> Partridge Road Harlow CM18 6TE <b>Parking:</b> Adjacent to centre but parking can't be guaranteed.</p>	