ACEducation

EXPERIENCE LEARNING

USER HANDBOOK

Contents

1. Introduction

Welcome to the AC Education Online Learning Environment.

This handbook provides important information to ensure your training progresses smoothly. Please read it carefully.

1.1   How to contact AC Education

If you have any technical queries regarding the use of the site then please contact AC Education using the details below:

Telephone   01923 850408

Email: supportline@ac-education.co.uk

If you query is regarding course allocations then please contact you Supervising Social worker or Training administrator.

Note: Our office hours are from 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 4pm Friday. Outside these hours please leave a message and we will contact you on the following working day.

2. About the Programme

The AC Education Short Course Programme offers a range of courses aimed at those working with vulnerable children and young people. The courses are delivered online so that users can work at their own pace and at a convenient time. Each course is roughly equivalent to one or two day's face-to-face training.

2.1   Account expiry

There is no built-in time limit for completing each course, though there may be a timescale for completion agreed with your supervisor or line manager.

> **Note: Access to the Online Learning Environment will cease immediately if your organisation's Annual Licence expires and is not renewed.**

2.2   Studying online Health and Safety

In the interests of Health and Safety we strongly recommend that you consider the following advice when setting up your learning environment:

- Try to set up a regular workplace adapted to your learning needs.

- Ensure that you can sit comfortably to study, and can vary your working position.

- Room temperature should be adjusted to an appropriate setting.

- Room lighting should be adjusted to avoid glare and eye strain.

- Consider the following when working with visual display units (VDUs):

  — Work should be periodically interrupted by breaks or change of activity.

  — Seating should be adjusted and the monitor, keyboard and mouse organised to ensure a comfortable posture.

  — Screens should be regularly cleaned.

3. The Online Learning Environment

This section of the handbook will introduce you to the key features of the SOLA system. You may find it useful to investigate each feature online while you read about it in the handbook.

3.1   Logging in

To access the SOLA system you will need your user name and password. If you were a learner with AC Education prior to 16th February 2015 your user name will be a Personal Identification Number (PIN) and password, which were provided in your Account Details email. If you have forgotten these details there is the option to request a new password, details of how to do this follow.

If a user was created after 16th February 2015 then the user name will be derived from the users email account name. This will be emailed to the user along with a system generated password. The user will be prompted to change this password to something more memorable the first time that they log into the system. Central Administrators will receive a copy of this email from AC Education.

To log in:

l   Go to www.ac-education.co.uk
2   Click the large orange button

3   Enter your PIN and Password
     Note: Your PIN and password are 'case sensitive'. Be careful to type capital or lower case characters as needed.

4   Click 'Go' to proceed
     The first time you access the Online Learning Environment you will be prompted to change your password. Please choose a combination of letters and numbers that will be difficult for someone to guess, and ensure that you keep your password secret at all times.

5   If you have forgotten your user name or password then please select the

forgotten your user name or password link and you can enter either your user name, if known, or your email address and we will send you a new password. Again you will be asked to change this on your first log in. This email will be sent to you as soon as the request is made and the link is active for 4 hours.

6 If you don't receive this email then please check your junk email folder. If the email is not found then please contact us at support@ac-education.co.uk so we can check if the email address recorded on the system is correct.
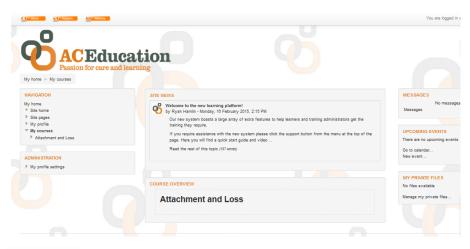
3.2   Security time out

Whenever you log in to the SOLA system you begin an electronic 'session'. This session will continue while you are using the website. If, for any reason, you leave the computer unattended, or you spend more than one hour without clicking any links, then your session will automatically 'time out' and end.

In the new system any unsaved work will be saved if this 'time-out' occurs even if you are in the middle of a quiz. To resume working you must log back into the site using the instructions given above.

3.3   The home page

After logging in you will see your home page.

The Support button takes you to the support pages where you will find a number of useful resources such as:

1 An online version of this handbook
2 A video quick start guide for users and training administrators

3 Answers to frequently asked questions

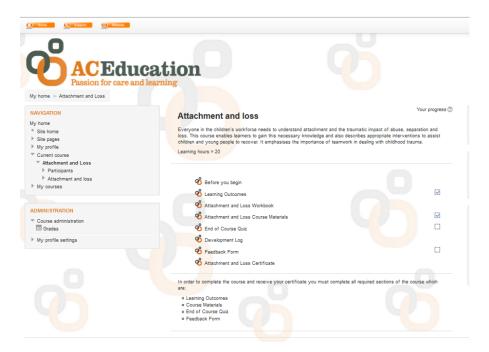The Home button returns you to your home page if you have navigated away from it.

This page also provides the following resources and information.

Site news

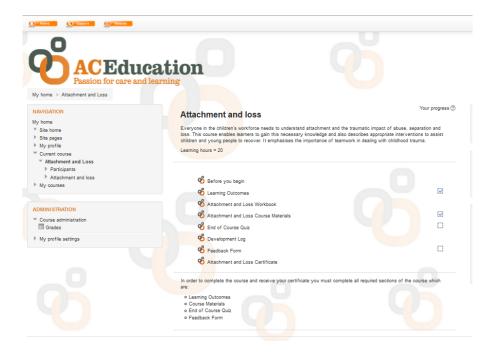This will show details of recent news at AC Education.

Course Overview

This will show any courses you have been allocated as a user. In the example above this user has been allocated Attachment and Loss. You click on the link and it will take you to the course materials as follows:

4   Training materials

4.1   The Training Navigation Panel

This panel enables you to navigate through the training materials. You can only access the next stage on the program when you have completed the steps in turn. For example you need to read the Learning Objectives before you start the course materials. The next section will remain greyed out until it is available to complete. When you have completed a section a tick will appear in the box next to each section.

Before you begin
If this is the first time you have completed an AC Education course this section tells you what you need to know.

Learning Outcomes
The learning outcomes identify what the learner will know and be able to do by the end of a course. You need to open and read thses before you can access the course materials. A link at the end of the page will take you back to the course

home page.

Workbook

- A free Workbook is provided with each course to allow users to make notes as they work through the course material. These do not form part of the assessment in the course, but will assist learning and can be added to a user's portfolio of evidence.

- In addition, some courses include extra resources to help in completing it (for instance our resource book *Protecting Children*).

Note: To open and print these resources, you will need to have Adobe Reader installed on your computer.

Course material

This is the course content, navigation is via the forward and back button.

As well as pages of information for users to read and think about, the training materials contain a number of interactive exercises to help with learning.

Activities are small exercises that test understanding as users progress through the course. They encourage users to stop and think about the subject being discussed, and may require them to compare elements of theory with their own experiences.

Some activities are more hands-on. They may require users to observe or try out activities in the workplace, draw a picture or talk to family, friends or colleagues.

When you have reached the conclusion of the course please click the link to return to the course home page.

End of Course Quiz

At the end of the course users complete a multiple-choice quiz to check that they have understood what they have been learning. This is only accessible once the course materials have been reviewed. Follow the on screen guidance to complete the quiz.

Users should not worry if they do not pass the quiz first time. Guidance is provided to help users answer any questions that were incorrectly answered, and the process of reviewing their answers and revisiting the course material is an important part of their learning.

Users have a maximum of three attempts at the quiz. If an incorrect answer to a question is selected on each of the first two attempts, there may be a problem

in their understanding of a particular part of the course content. It may be helpful for them to raise this with their supervisor.

If they answer any questions incorrectly on the third attempt they will still complete the course, but an indication of their final result will be given on their Certificate and in the SOLA system.

When users have successfully finished the quiz, or after their third unsuccessful attempt, a link will appear on their home page and on the View User Account page to provide access to their Completion Certificate and Development Log.

Quiz questions rotate on each attempt.

Feedback form
Before you are able to print out your certificate we ask that you complete a short feedback form.

Certificate
Once you have completed the feedback form you will be able to print out your certificate for your records.

4.2   The Portfolio of evidence

Alongside the online course(s), the Programme includes a range of printable resources that can be used to enhance learning and to provide a permanent record of users' development.

The portfolio of evidence consists of:

A Workbook

This can be printed as soon as users start the course and used to keep a note of their thoughts and experiences as they work through the online activities and practical exercises.

A Completion Certificate

The certificate is personal to each user – it is a formal and permanent record that they have completed the course.

A Development Log

The Development Log enables users to show how they can use what they have learned in their practice. It also enables them to record any further learning and development needs that have been identified during your training. Space is provided for comments to be approved by the user's manager or supervisor.