Welcome to the
Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence
The Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE) programme offers each apprentice the chance to fulfill his dream of becoming a professional footballer, while at the same time providing him with the opportunity to develop academic skills in an environment suitable for his all-round personal development.

We realise that for many youngsters the apprenticeship is both an exciting but daunting proposition, so the purpose of this booklet is to try to provide you with the information that will help you better understand the apprentice journey.

League Football Education will work hard to provide a supportive environment to allow apprentices to thrive, while positive input from parents/guardians is also vitally important.

The transition from full-time schooling to the rigours and demands of training and playing every day is a challenging but rewarding experience.

Over the next two years as an apprentice, the focus will undoubtedly be on progressing through the youth and development sides to the first-team. However, the education programme is also a key factor in developing a broader identity that can contribute to success on and off the pitch. As a result, it is crucial to remain committed and set goals and targets which will provide a platform to achieve the qualifications.

I would encourage all apprentices to make the most of this exciting and privileged opportunity, ensuring they enjoy the all-round experience and realise that it is essential to maintain focus on football and education.

We hope this booklet gives you a good introduction to LFE and answers many of your questions, but if not, a list of LFE contacts is available for you to approach and receive further guidance.
I would like to offer a warm welcome to the world of full-time football and in particular to the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence.

It’s an exciting time as a 16-year-old to earn a two-year apprenticeship at a professional football club. It really is the start of a journey.

You’ve got to have that focus and motivation to have your own mind and keep following the path you want to lead. Setbacks and failures are something you will have to deal with along the way. At times you will need the resilience to go again, but that is part and parcel of football and life in general.

Everyone develops at different stages within the two-year apprenticeship. You might not play that much in your first year and then get a lot of opportunities in your second year. The moral of the story is that you’ve got to be ready at all times.

The apprenticeship helps you with this. There are many reminders of the stats that show that almost half of apprentices gain a professional contract and there are different options and avenues that you can take. For example, I know some from my group at Rochdale that went on to get scholarships in America. You’re shaping your life and you need to make sure you’ve got plans in place for any eventuality.

I’ve seen towards the end of my career that your football will flourish if you’re comfortable and you know that you’ve got alternatives in place. If you’ve put all your eggs in one basket and discard your education and then football doesn’t pan out as you wished, you’re left with nothing.

There are many transferable skills involved. Although you’ve been used to using your body as your tool, that doesn’t mean you can’t engage your brain. You learn about time-keeping, discipline, sacrifice, teamwork and that your diet and your well-being are important.

Being identified as ‘the footballer’ follows you around as a young person in an academy and so it’s healthy to have another string to your bow. Having won Apprentice of the Year back in 2007, I’m living proof that showing dedication to the academic side of things doesn’t mean that you are limiting your chances in gaining a professional contract.

Throughout the two years, you will also have multiple Life Skills sessions, which are so important. All of the different elements, like mental health, addiction, social media and personal development, are things that you need to be aware of in order to stay healthy. There’s an air of maturity and a willingness to learn that comes with developing as a person, which then transfers onto the pitch.

Ultimately, if you can look yourself in the mirror after two years and say ‘I gave it my all in every aspect’ then that’s all you can ask for. If it goes your way then brilliant, if it doesn’t then there’s more to life than football. It doesn’t define who you are and you might find another passion along the way that you’d rather pursue.

I would recommend being open-minded and always be willing to listen. Anyone that’s trying to teach you or explain a message, you’ve got to ask yourself why they’re doing it. Either they’ve experienced it and they’ve learned the lesson themselves, or they know someone that has, so they’re just trying to help you and it’s important to take on board that wisdom.

Good luck and very best wishes.

Joe Thompson
Former pro footballer, two-time cancer survivor and now motivational speaker
About us

Who are we?
LFE was established by The English Football League and The Professional Footballers Association to manage the apprenticeship programme.

We have 27 staff, with 13 working across the country dealing with club and college staff to support apprentices throughout their two years. LFE aim to help all apprentices achieve the full educational framework and to support apprentices moving into positive destinations at the end of the programme.

Our Regional Officers visit apprentices on a regular basis to monitor progress. Any problems or concerns can be raised with them.

Why are we here?
We are here to manage and operate the apprenticeship programme on behalf of all English Football League clubs.

LFE is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, the European Social Fund and by football. The education programme has been designed by our sector skills council SkillsActive in partnership with football authorities and government agencies.

Our Regional Officers are your direct link with LFE. They are the people who you can turn to for help and advice on any subject during the next two years. Our Regional Officers and all LFE staff are here to ensure that apprentices are given the best chance possible to fully benefit from the ASE programme.

Your Regional Officer should be your first point of contact with LFE, however you can also speak to central office staff.

Contact information for all staff can be found on page 42.

Did you know... Our Regional Officers visit apprentices on a regular basis to monitor progress. Any problems or concerns can be raised with them.
Our Partners

The Professional Footballers Association

The world’s longest established professional sportsmen’s union, the Professional Footballers Association was formed in 1907 at the Imperial Hotel Manchester, and has continued to develop and expand.

Today the PFA directly and indirectly employs over 250 people in key areas such as, education and training for post-football careers, accident and medical insurance, coaching, financial management, contract advice and pension management for the benefit of more than 4,000 current members and 50,000 former members worldwide.

The PFA works alongside many other national and international bodies and has carried out projects in key areas such as drug awareness and testing and an anti-racism campaign.

All the benefits of PFA membership are available to apprentices, these include:

- Discretionary post-18 educational grant system
- Contractual assistance/player management
- Representation on disciplinary issues
- Access to legal and financial advice

It is highly recommended you join the PFA. The Costs are £20 per year plus a one-off joining fee of £20.

Did you know...

The PFA looks after more than 4,000 current members and 50,000 former members worldwide.

Contact the PFA through your club representative or write to:
The PFA
20 Oxford Court
Bishopsgate
Manchester
M2 3WQ
T: 0161 236 0575
www.thepfa.com

English Football League (EFL)

History

Formed in 1888 by its twelve founder members, under the direction of pioneer William McGregor, the English Football League (EFL) is the world’s original league football competition and is the template for leagues the world over.

Its 72 member clubs embody the unique heritage, pride and passion of the communities that they represent, providing the game with a platform to become a truly global phenomenon.

Competitions

The Sky Bet EFL is comprised of three divisions – the Sky Bet Championship, Sky Bet League One and Sky Bet League Two – with 24 teams in each division. 552 regular season matches per division culminate in the high and lows of the end-of-season Play-Offs, including three showpiece finals at Wembley Stadium.

Alongside league competitions, the Carabao Cup was established in 1960 and is English football’s midweek cup competition, featuring all 72 EFL Clubs and 20 from the Premier League, with the winners of the competition receiving entry into the following season’s UEFA Europa League.

A second midweek competition, the Checkatrade Trophy, comprises of all 48 Sky Bet League One and League Two Clubs, as well as 16 invited U21 teams. The competition has a history of promoting innovation and opportunity, having undergone several changes in format since its inception in 1983.

Youth Development

It is the EFL’s long-term ambition to continue to create more and better opportunities for young players to become professional footballers, investing over £90million into Youth Development each season.

Last season, almost 45% of EFL scholars gained a professional contract with an EFL club, with those that were unsuccessful gaining support from League Football Education to move into further education, semi-professional football or full-time employment. The national team are also benefiting from the strength and depth of EFL club academies, with 20 out of the 23 players in the England 2018 World Cup squad having either come through EFL academies, made their debuts in the EFL or played on loan in the EFL.

In its aim to provide young footballers a clear pathway of progression from Academy to first team, EFL clubs agreed to include seven home grown players on team sheets. The EFL also introduced a requirement for at least one club-developed player to be named on each team sheet for any EFL League game at the start of the 2018/19 season.

Community

Off the pitch, the EFL Trust and Club Community Schemes work tirelessly, using the power of football to positively impact towns, cities and people’s lives up and down the country. Connecting people of all ages and backgrounds, the EFL Trust network changes people’s lives by improving health, boosting education and bringing communities closer together. The EFL is committed to ensuring inclusivity across all reaches of the game and that the League’s 72 clubs reflect the diverse nature of the communities they represent.

Contact the EFL through your club representative or write to:

The EFL
145 High Holborn
London WC1V 6EA
T: 020 7060 6300
W: www.efl.com
E: info@efl.com
Keeping you informed

LFE is committed to supporting all apprentices throughout and beyond their two-year apprenticeships. We have developed a number of channels to engage everyone associated with the apprenticeship programme. Our website and social media channels are the first port of call for the latest news. We tackle all areas from apprenticeship related issues to coverage of all the U18 League’s incorporating fixtures, results, league tables and match reports.

LFETV showcases our Goal of the Month competition which features the best goals from all the Academy Leagues and attracts over 25,000 viewers each season. We utilise an e-learning platform to manage the education programme and to provide players with useful guidance and information on a variety of real life issues like dealing with agents, money, drugs and sex.

Digital & Social Media

Follow us online and via Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube to stay ahead of the latest developments.

Publications

Publications include Touchline, our quarterly magazine, and guides to support players considering Higher Education or soccer scholarships in the USA.

Face-to-face

LFE staff support apprentices throughout and beyond the two-year programme to help players realise their potential.
Player & Club Testimonials

Ryan Sessegnon
Fulham
The 2018 EFL Awards were dominated by Ryan as he claimed five trophies, including LFE’s Championship Apprentice of the Year. Having been a mainstay in Fulham’s team since starting the apprenticeship, he has already made over 100 first-team appearances as a teenager. And yet, Ryan remained committed to his academic studies. He told LFE: “It’s been important to me to pass my education because you never know what can happen. “I don’t really get a lot of free time but when I do I make sure I do the right things and just keep working on making myself better, whether that’s football or education.”

Scott Fitzgerald
Academy Manager, Millwall
At Millwall we take great pride from the work we do to develop young players at youth level. It is extremely rewarding to see a number of youngsters graduate into the first-team. Ben Thompson, Fred Onyedinma, Aidan O’Brien and Sid Nelson have all progressed in recent times.

As a club we are fully committed to both the football and educational aspects of the Apprenticeship scheme because by striking the right balance between the two we can ensure that the needs of every individual apprentice are met. The apprenticeship is about producing players but also individuals who can be a success away from the game. The nature of the programme helps to develop transferable skills that are a great back-up for those that just fall short of making it as a professional footballer.

Mark Wilgose
Head of Education & Welfare, Sheffield United
We tell every player that comes on an apprenticeship at Sheffield United that Education is not part of a Plan B, it is part of Plan A in terms of helping them to become a better person, a better footballer and giving them a better understanding of the game they play.

It is a message that reverberates around our Academy and one that is fully endorsed by our academy manager, Travis Binnion, who himself came through the academy system as a player before beginning his coaching career.

We want all of our young players to prosper and fulfil their potential. Kyle Walker, Dominic Calvert-Lewin, Harry Maguire and others have come through the system here to make huge strides in the game while others have gone on to soccer scholarships in America, studied for degrees in the UK or gone on to other jobs.

All of our players go out on work experience to businesses in the local community that are partners of the club. We want to get them out into the big wide world just so they get a feel of what it is like to do a real job so they can appreciate what the working world is like for a lot of people and get a breadth of different experiences while they are here.

Jamie Hopcutt
York City
(Now at Ostersunds FK)
Former York City youth-team winger Jamie Hopcutt is making his mark in Sweden. Converted into a central striker, Hopcutt played a key role in helping his current club, Ostersunds FK, reach the Swedish Premier League for the first time in their history and featured during the club’s stunning 2017-18 Europa League run, even starting at the Emirates Stadium in a 2-1 victory over Arsenal. Hopcutt had been turning out for Tadcaster Albion before making the switch to Scandinavia via LFE’s Erasmus+ player placement programme.

Alex Willis
Charlton Athletic
(Now Northern Kentucky University)
Despite being offered a professional contract by Charlton, the lure of a soccer scholarship in the USA took Alex to the other side of the Atlantic. "I would say you get the best of both worlds, in terms of preparing for the distant future with a degree, but also working every day to become a better player and striving to be a professional footballer," he said.

“It’s a life-changing experience and one I would highly recommend as it has helped me as a person and a player.”

Jake Hilton
Crewe Alexandra (Now Loughborough University, BSc Mathematics)
Things are adding-up for former Crewe goalkeeper Jake, who is following his passion for numbers at Loughborough University. “I always enjoyed Maths, so I thought that would fit with coming to University and continuing my education,” he said.

“It’s hard work but I’m going to come out of it with a degree which takes me on in life, doing something I enjoy.”

» We want all of our young players to prosper and fulfil their potential. Kyle Walker, Dominic Calvert-Lewin, Harry Maguire and others have come through the system here to make huge strides in the game «
This section gives a brief outline of the components that make up the ASE framework and the process that is undertaken to ensure that apprentices’ individual needs are identified and met over the course of the two-year programme.

The ASE Framework
LFE is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the European Social Fund (ESF) to deliver the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE). A conceptual diagram is outlined below.
Initial Assessment
Initial Assessments are carried out with every apprentice to establish academic ability. Where possible LFE Regional Officers will undertake initial assessments in partnership with the following people:
• The apprentice’s parents/guardians
• The Education & Welfare Officer/Academy Manager
• A tutor from the dedicated educational establishment
The assessment will normally be carried out anytime between March and July and will enable the apprentice to be placed on the most appropriate educational programme based upon expected GCSE results. All apprentices will undertake an online bksb assessment as part of the Initial Assessment process.

Final Assessment
A second assessment (to include the appropriate personnel) will take place in late August/early September when the apprentices have had their GCSE results confirmed.
Should the GCSE results achieved confirm the grades given at the Initial Assessment, the apprentice will be able to commence the academic programme agreed previously.
However, if the apprentice has either exceeded or not achieved the grades given at the Initial Assessment, further discussions will take place to ensure an appropriate academic programme is designed to meet the apprentice’s needs.

Induction
This will be carried out at the start of the apprenticeship. LFE provide each club with a set of standard induction units that includes the following topics:
• ASE Educational Framework
• Employment Rights and Responsibilities
• Club Rules and Regulations
• Health & Safety
• Equality of Opportunity
• Drugs Awareness
• Apprentice Wellbeing
• Safeguarding

Pre-Season Training
This period of time is used to ensure that apprentices meet the fitness requirements for professional football and clubs will carry this out according to individual club practice.

Apprentice Reviews
Apprentice reviews are conducted with LFE Regional Officers and are recorded on an e-learning platform. The review process clearly establishes the level of progress made, and agreed actions for each apprentice. Regional Officers are responsible for coordinating this process.

ASE
Reviews will be conducted in the following areas:
1. NVQ Diploma in Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance (completed by the Tutor Assessor)
2. Technical Certificate (completed by the education/college tutor)
3. Functional Skills English and Maths (completed by Functional Skills tutor if appropriate)
4. Overall individual review (conducted by the LFE Regional Officer)

Review Cycle
Reviews will be conducted at a maximum of 12 weekly intervals. It is essential that apprentices are available for reviews.
The only acceptable absences from reviews are as follows:
• Apprentices selected for the first team or international duty
• Apprentices involved in FA Youth Cup matches
• Apprentices who produce a sick note from the doctor or club physiotherapist

The Football Development Programme
The football training programme will cover:
• Pre-Season Training - This period of time is used to ensure that the apprentice will be able meet the fitness requirements for professional football.
• Football Training - This will include work on technical and tactical skills, physical conditioning and psychology
• Football Coaching
• Assessments of Progress - Apprentices will be evaluated on technical ability, teamwork, character and physical condition
• Theory of Football Tactics

Education
The educational programme has been specifically designed for elite athletes and is geared towards nationally recognised qualifications. The educational programme will consist of the following elements:
• NVQ Diploma in Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance (Level 3)
• Technical Certificate (Level 3)
• Functional Skills (Level 2)
• Certificate in Coaching (Level 2)
Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE)

Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance

The apprentice will need to complete the following mandatory units to successfully gain the NVQ:

- Plan, apply and evaluate own tactical skills to achieve excellence in a sport
- Plan, apply and evaluate own technical skills to achieve excellence in a sport
- Plan, apply and evaluate own physical capability to achieve excellence in sport
- Plan, apply and evaluate own nutritional programme to achieve excellence in sport
- Plan, apply and evaluate own mental skills and attitudes to achieve excellence in sport
- Plan and manage own lifestyle to achieve excellence in sport
- Manage own career in sport
- Communicate and work effectively with other people to achieve excellence in sport
- Maintain the health and safety of self and others at training and competition venues

Aims and Objectives

This qualification offers the apprentice, as an elite or potentially elite athlete, to get certificated recognition of the skills, knowledge and understanding that they are developing in their quest for excellence.

The overall objectives of the NVQ are to enable the apprentice to demonstrate his practical sporting ability and explore the issues surrounding professionalism, working as a team, managing self, health & safety, careers and employment.

NVQ Assessment

Assessment is based on what the apprentice can do and involves the apprentice (the candidate), an assessor, an internal verifier and an external verifier.

The apprentice will be asked to prove that they are competent by providing evidence, which shows that they:

- Can perform all the specified tasks consistently to the required standard
- Understand why they are doing things (knowledge and understanding)
- Can apply the required skills in different ways (scope)

Assessment is flexible and the apprentice can be awarded a certificate for each unit that they successfully achieve, even if they do not complete the full NVQ.

There is no set period of time in which the apprentice needs to complete a unit or NVQ. However, the apprentice and the assessor should still set target dates for completing each unit. Be realistic though, as there are many factors such as the apprentice’s previous experience, demands within the workplace and an availability of resources that will affect how quickly the apprentice is able to achieve the qualification.

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

Comprise of six groups of skills that, alongside English and Mathematics, are essential to learning, life and work, they are:

- Independent enquiry
- Reflective learning
- Team work
- Creative thinking
- Self management
- Effective participation

These skills will be mapped into the NVQ Diploma and BTEC qualifications.

Employment Rights & Responsibilities (ERR)

Are incorporated into the NVQ Diploma (Level 3) and club induction.

Technical Certificate

A technical certificate is part of the apprenticeship framework. This should be discussed with the apprentice at Initial and Final Assessments with the LFE Regional Officer and will be subject to anticipated/confirmed GCSE results.

The current technical certificate pathways are as follows:

- BTEC Subsidiary/Diploma/Extended Diploma

Did you know...

Assessment is flexible and the apprentice can be awarded a certificate for each unit they successfully achieve.
BTEC’s
The BTEC Subsidiary Diploma has 7 units, the Diploma in Sport has 13 units and the BTEC Extended Diploma has 19 units. There are a set number of core units but most subjects have a choice of what option units to take. See the tables on the opposite page for more information.

Course Length and Duration
The BTEC Subsidiary Diploma in Sport qualification could be completed over one year, while the Diploma and Extended Diploma should be completed over two years.

BTEC Assessment
All units will be internally assessed through assignments set and marked by tutors. Upon completion of each internally assessed unit the tutor will inform the apprentice of what grade they have achieved (either Pass, Merit or Distinction). To ensure that the internally assessed work has been marked accurately, Edexcel will conduct sample checks of tutors’ marking. This process usually takes place between January and April and the grades for internally assessed units could change as a result. Edexcel will confirm final grades when this re-marking has been undertaken.

When all the units of the course have been completed, the apprentice will receive an overall grade for the qualification (again Pass, Merit or Distinction). This is the grade that will be shown on the certificate and the one that should be used when applying for higher education or employment.

The Value of the BTEC Qualification
The BTEC qualification should provide the apprentice with underpinning knowledge towards the work completed on the Level 3 NVQ Diploma Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance and give a further insight into the requirements of being an elite athlete within the football industry.

The BTEC also affords the opportunity to complete a nationally recognised qualification that should assist the apprentice with higher education and employment applications. For further information about using your BTEC towards entrance into higher education please see www.ucas.co.uk

A UCAS Tariff Table and information on the tariff system can be found in LFE’s Guide to Higher Education Applications, available on our website. As a guide, however, the BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport is the equivalent of three A Levels, the Diploma in Sport is the equivalent to two A Levels and the Subsidiary Diploma is equivalent to one A Level.

» The BTEC affords the opportunity to complete a nationally recognised qualification that should assist the apprentice with higher education and employment applications «
Level 2 Functional Skills
Functional Skills are skills that are commonly needed for success in a range of activities in education, training, work and life in general. Functional Skills aim to deal with:
- Mathematics
- English
Apprentices will be exempt from these qualifications if they have achieved GCSE grades 9-4 in Maths or English Language/Literature.

Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football
As part of the programme, each apprentice will also undertake the 1st4Sport Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football. This includes units on:
- Coaching principles and ethics
- Planning coaching sessions
- Conducting coaching sessions

Course Length and Duration
The course will comprise of:
- Theory and practical training
- Child Protection
- First Aid
- Coaching Hours
- Formative Assessment

Aims & Objectives of the Coaching Certificate
The coaching qualification underpins the work that each apprentice completes on the Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance and allows apprentices to:
- Develop an appreciation of the ethical coaching process
- Plan, conduct and evaluate a series of football coaching sessions
- Coach the basic skills and techniques of football to others
- Ensure the health and safety of players and others within the coaching environment
- Develop greater responsibility for your own learning and development
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of attack and defence through the use of practices and small-sided games

FA Introduction to First Aid in Football
This will also be delivered at the same time as the 1st4Sport Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football. The apprentice will receive tuition from a qualified emergency aid instructor and learn to deal with emergency situations such as choking, heart attacks, major bleeding and the resuscitation of unconscious casualties. On completion this certificate is valid for a period of three years.

The Value of your Coaching Qualification
As well underpinning the work that the apprentice will complete on the Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance, the coaching qualification provides a formal and recognised qualification.

The course, which is a stepping stone to the UEFA B Licence, should also allow the apprentice to understand the role of the coach, improve upon their personal skills such as communication and give them greater responsibility.

It also affords apprentices the opportunity to coach in the following areas:
- American Soccer Camps
- Academies & Development Centres
- Football in the Community
- Soccer schools
- Local schools

* Dependent on the role, a UEFA B Licence may be required
Wages
At the time of writing, the current national minimum wage rates for apprentices is as follows:
• £3.90 per hour from April 2019 - the rate for apprentices aged 16-18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year as an apprentice
• £6.15 per hour for an apprentice aged 19 in the second year of their apprenticeship.

Most clubs will operate their apprenticeship programmes on a 30 hour per week basis.

Lodgings and Accommodation
Where it is unreasonable for an apprentice to travel to the club from home, lodgings should be provided by the club. However clubs will be entitled to charge apprentices up to £7.55 per day from April 2019 for this service.

In line with English Football League (EFL) Rules on Youth Development and current legislation clubs shall, in all dealings with apprentices, do what is reasonable for the purpose of safeguarding apprentices’ welfare.

Clubs are expected to ensure that lodgings are in keeping with those required by a professional sportsman and should utilise guidance approved by the EFL.

Under the terms and conditions of the Scholarship/Apprenticeship Agreement section 5.3.1 The scholar shall not: “reside at any place which the club reasonably deems unsuitable for the performance of his obligations under the agreement.”

If the apprentice was living a considerable distance away from the club then section 5.3.1 could apply. Travelling long distances to and from training and matches could cause a number of problems such as fatigue which affected playing performance and learning, punctuality and attendance issues, and it may have a cost implication.

Please note: Wage and accommodation rates are reviewed each year by Government. Changes to these rates are applied annually.

This section outlines the various ways in which an apprentice’s circumstances might change during the course of the programme.

Termination by Mutual Consent
In order for an apprentice’s contract to be terminated by mutual consent, both the apprentice and the club must confirm their agreement with the terms of the termination. It is strongly advised that apprentices who may be considering terminating by mutual consent should discuss this matter with their LFE Regional Officer or The PFA who are aware of all the implications.

Signing Professional Forms
If a club signs an apprentice on a professional contract on his 17th birthday, or before the end of his apprenticeship, English Football League rules state that he must continue with his education course until it is completed.

Change of Circumstances

Termination for Disciplinary Reasons
Page 29 outlines the standard disciplinary procedures that should be imposed on apprentices who breach either club regulations or the code of discipline concerning college attendance. Clubs must ensure that the procedures on page 29 are followed and that LFE is involved in each stage of the disciplinary process.
Change of Circumstances

Injury
There are two instances in which the circumstances of an apprentice might change due to injury:

1. Recoverable Injury
   Apprentices who are suspended from the programme due to injury would still be expected to fulfil the educational element of the apprenticeship whilst undergoing rehabilitation or treatment.

2. Permanent Incapacity
   Apprentices who suffer an injury which results in permanent incapacity shall, upon receiving the correct notice (minimum 3 months) as laid down in clause 8 of the Apprentice’s Agreement, be released from the apprenticeship programme.

Long Term Injuries
The club physiotherapist/doctor should make a diagnosis to ascertain whether the apprentice has sustained an injury which could prevent him from training/playing for a substantial period of time. This period of absence from playing/training may prevent the club’s coaching staff from carrying out a thorough assessment of the apprentice’s playing ability. In the long term this may affect the apprentice’s chances of being offered a professional contract.

Should this be the situation, the club may wish to suspend the apprentice’s programme under Clause 4 of the Apprenticeship Agreement. The clause states that if an apprentice is prevented from participating in the training programme for a period in excess of five weeks, the duration of the Apprenticeship Agreement shall be extended by the length of the excess period or, if earlier, the apprentice’s nineteenth birthday.

Apprenticeship Work Experience Between Clubs
Work experience allows an apprentice to spend a reasonable time training and playing at another club.

Implications
If an apprentice is at another club on work experience this does not prevent him from going back to his original club as often as he likes. Indeed, the apprentice can travel backwards and forwards on the strength of just one letter of permission. No recalls are necessary.

The apprentice remains the original club’s player who will hold his registration and be responsible for all travel, lodging and apprentice wage payments. Should the apprentice be incurring lodging or high travel costs, it will be the responsibility of the original club to come to an agreement with the work experience club.

English Football League clubs cannot play apprentices that are on work experience from another club in any match at first team level.

Arranging a Permanent Move
Permanently transfer apprenticeships between clubs are allowed and in order to do this all applications with the original club should be cancelled and new forms signed at his new club.

Discipline

Apprentices are subject to club discipline and this should be made clear at induction, with all club rules and regulations explained fully to apprentices.

Apprentices should also be made aware of the disciplinary code of practice for college attendance.

Schedule Two of the Scholarship/Apprenticeship Agreement

Should any apprentice fall foul of these regulations, then the disciplinary procedure outlined in Schedule Two of the Apprenticeship Agreement will apply. In summary, this procedure involves the following three steps:

1. Investigation
2. Disciplinary Hearing
3. Appeals

Penalties and Termination

If, having followed the above procedure, an allegation is proved to the club’s satisfaction, the club may apply the penalties outlined in Schedule Two, Section 4 of the Apprenticeship Agreement:

1. Issue a formal warning which should be issued as follows:
   (i) Verbal Warning
   (ii) First Written Warning
   (iii) Final Written Warning

2. Impose a fine not exceeding the amount of 50% of his monthly basic wage.

3. Order the apprentice not to attend at any of the club’s premises for such a period as the club thinks fit not exceeding two weeks.

4. Where the circumstances set out in Clause 10.1 of the Apprenticeship Agreement apply, terminate this agreement.

Clause 10 of the Apprenticeship Agreement

Termination

Clause 10.1 of the Apprenticeship Agreement states that the club shall be entitled to terminate the agreement by fourteen days’ notice in writing to the apprentice if, after due investigation and enquiry, it is reasonably satisfied that he:

1. Shall be guilty of Gross Misconduct;
2. Has failed to heed any final written warning given under the provisions of Schedule Two (see above); or
3. Is convicted of any criminal offence where the punishment consists of an immediate custodial sentence of or exceeding three months.

Notice of Termination

Under Clause 10.2 of the Scholarship/Apprenticeship Agreement, clubs are required to include in any notice of termination full particulars of the club’s reasons for terminating the agreement with copies sent to the English Football League (EFL), The Football Association and The PFA. A copy should also be sent to LFE.

Appeals

Clause 10.3 of the Apprenticeship Agreement states that within seven days of receiving a termination notice the apprentice may appeal against the decision of the club to the EFL. All parties should then seek to ensure that the appeal is heard within a further 28 days.
College/Education Provider attendance

As a condition of our funding from the ESFA, it is obligatory for all apprentices to attend their college/education provider sessions each week (i.e. usually one and a half days on their education programme). The education days are decided in consultation with the club and, once agreed, it is the responsibility of the club to ensure that apprentices attend the college/education provider on these days.

Apprentices, if injured, must not miss their academic work to receive routine treatment at the club. If the club requires the apprentice to receive treatment, the apprentice must be called in after college/education provider work has finished.

The only acceptable absences from College are as follows:

• FA Youth Cup commitments
• Apprentices selected for the first team or international duty
• Apprentices who produce a sick note from the doctor or club physiotherapist

Exams/Assessments

A proportion of our funding from the ESFA is dependant upon apprentices actually achieving the qualifications that they enter. It is therefore essential that apprentices are available to attend any exams/assessments in relation to their educational/vocational courses. It is the responsibility of the club to ensure that apprentices attend any such exams/assessments.

Code of discipline concerning college/education provider attendance

The following regulations are in place regarding college attendance:

1. LFE reserve the right to remove an apprentice from the education programme if they miss college or their education work on more than three occasions in one academic year without a good reason (i.e. selection for the first team or a sick note).
2. Apprentices misbehaving at college will be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined on page 27.
3. Apprentices who do not hand in written work set by the college will be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined on page 27.

Safeguarding

LFE aim to ensure that every apprentice is trained in an enjoyable and safe environment and is protected from abuse. Apprentices should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment protected from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying.

LFE subscribe to The Football Association’s ‘Working Together to Safeguard Football’ document. The key principles of The FA Child Protection Policy are that:

• The child’s welfare is and must always be the paramount consideration
• All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
• All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
• Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents or carers is essential

Allegations, concerns or disclosures of a child protection nature received from apprentices will be referred to the EFL Safeguarding Manager, The FA Case Management Team and/or appropriate statutory agency. LFE’s designated safeguarding officer(s) will have a role to play in investigating complaints of poor practice.

Further sources of information on safeguarding:

LFE Safeguarding
GOV.UK Safeguarding
The FA Safeguarding
PFA Safety Net
LFE has a wide range of strategies to support the learner and the club during the ASE programme to ensure that every apprentice receives Equality of Opportunity.

Our Position & Commitment
LFE is fully committed to a policy of Equality of Opportunity. We aim to ensure that staff at all levels work in an environment free from any discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

At the same time we also work hard to ensure that every apprentice is treated fairly and is encouraged to develop to his full potential in all aspects of his training. LFE will seek to ensure that apprentices do not suffer any form of discrimination and that they are supported to understand their rights and responsibilities during the two-year programme.

LFE will discuss equality awareness with apprentices during progress reviews to monitor their understanding and experience during training. Clubs and apprentices will be able to access a wide range of support provided by LFE, starting with induction, right through to extensive exit and progression activities.

During the year LFE will provide clubs, apprentices and Education Providers with the opportunity to comment on how we manage the ASE programme and to suggest any changes that might be beneficial.

LFE will continue to work in partnership with The EFL and Premier League on anti-discrimination and inclusiveness awareness.

In addition, LFE continues to work with Kick It Out to deliver diversity training at football clubs. This work will continue in the 2018-19 season.

Club Responsibility
There is a significant amount of legislation to address discrimination, which clubs should be aware of, designed to ensure that each individual is treated equally and fairly.

All clubs should have policies and procedures in respect of Equality and Diversity. LFE reserve the right to ask clubs for their equality documentation at any time.

LFE expect all clubs to attend The EFL Safeguarding seminars and courses to support the equality agenda.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in ASE including club staff and apprentices to ensure that our policies are implemented and supported. We ask that all clubs develop an environment where equality, fairness, security and respect are an integral part of the ASE programme.

Useful Websites:
- www.acas.org.uk
- www.equalityhumanrights.com
- www.kickitout.org
- www.ofsted.gov.uk
- www.thefa.com

Health & Safety
Reporting of accidents/injuries and Industrial Diseases Procedure

Process to be followed:
- If the injury is going to be long term, the apprentice should make an application to Job Centre Plus for employment and support allowance and/or income support as soon as possible after the injury occurring
- The amount of benefit received by the apprentice is dependant upon individual circumstances
- During the period of incapacity, the apprentice will need to provide sick notes to confirm his continued eligibility to claim benefits

Further guidance on this issue can be found at www.gov.uk by searching for employment and support allowance.

PFA Accident and Insurance Fund
Once you have obtained membership of the PFA you should be aware that the PFA makes a contribution to the English Football League and Premier League on condition that all clubs provide private medical insurance cover for both full professionals and apprentices.

In addition all current and former members have access to the PFA’s Accident and Insurance Fund whereby grants may be made to help cover medical expenses. The PFA also provides Accident & Sickness Insurance of up to £25,000 for current members whose careers are cut short due to a specific accident or illness.
League Football Education wants more for apprentices than successful achievement of the ASE qualification, we support the development of well-rounded people.

Those who embrace personal development as well as alternative interests, employment, education or training, equip themselves to excel as footballers and for life off-the-field.

Personal Development, Behaviours and Welfare

LFE’s PDBW Model provides a framework for planning and delivering this wider development.

**Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare (PDBW), Life Skills and Progression**

**WHY?**

**HOW?**

**WHAT?**

**Self Awareness**
Self-reflection, viewing yourself as more than a footballer, having other interests, valuing yourself in other settings (family, friendships outside football), setting goals for character development, personal presentation

**Confidence**
Positivity, can-do attitude, trust in yourself, in all situations, willingness to get out of your comfort zone, courage, leadership, self-esteem

**Social Competence**
Communication skills, social skills, interpersonal skills, relationship development, tolerance, empathy, compassion

**Resilience**
Determination, competitiveness, strive to be your best, work ethic, discipline, self-regulation, persistence

**Accountability**
Taking responsibility, trustworthiness, reliability, decisiveness, strong time management

**Motivation**
Ambition, strong purpose, desire to learn, desire to understand, enthusiasm

**Respect**
Consideration of others, good manners, unselfishness, integrity

**YOU DECIDE…**
League Football Education wants more for apprentices than successful achievement of the ASE qualification, we support clubs to develop well-rounded people.

LFE believes those who embrace personal development as well as alternative interests, employment, education or training, equip themselves to excel as footballers and for life off-the-field. Progression is a strategy aimed at providing the life skills, information, advice, guidance, support and opportunities for personal growth, contributing to long term success both on and off the pitch.

Life Skills

Life Skills sessions, aim to raise awareness and empower apprentices with the knowledge and skills required to deal with the demands of football and life. These include:

- Cathy Wood  Social Media
- Cecil Jee Thomas  Talent Transfer
- Charlie Fogarty  Anything Is Possible
- Colin Avery  Sexual Health Awareness
- Heart4More Foundation  Cardiac Health Awareness
- If U Care Share  Emotional Well-Being
- Kick It Out  Equality and Diversity
- LFE’s My Future Today  Personal Development
- Sporting Chance Clinic  Lifestyle and Education
- Trained Brain  Sports Performance

My Future Today

Delivered to each club once every 2 years by LFE, Dame Kelly Holmes Trust and AFTA Thought, My Future Today raises awareness of personal development and its benefits to performance, well-being and transition.

Through acting performances and workshops facilitated by athlete mentors, this innovative workshop encourages the development of alternative interests and undertaking of personal development. It helps apprentices to understand their broader identity, personality traits and transferable skills whilst providing an opportunity to explore alternative/complimentary careers and to set their own personal development goals.

Moving on from the ASE programme is a key transition challenge, whether this be into the first team or into other sporting/non-sporting environments, so along with the personal development and life skills activity, LFE and its partners can provide information, advice, guidance and practical support.

The PFA

For more information please contact:
- Pat Lally (Director of Education)
- Oshor Williams (Assistant Director of Education)
- Paul Raven (PFA/ULF Project manager)
- Jason Lee (Equalities Education Executive)
- Jayne Bailey (Education Secretary)
- Shane Birtles (Administrator)

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E-mail: education@thepfa.co.uk

U-Explore

LFE recognise that there are a number of pathways apprentices want to take post-apprenticeship and we want to ensure that all possible information is made available. In order to do this LFE has invested in the online tool U-Explore. This houses up to date information as well as video testimonials on all major employment sectors with over 1500 job roles and requirements explained.

Go to www.u-explore.com to get a taste of what is on offer at this excellent resource.

Please contact your Regional Officer for details required to register an account and begin using this resource.

Tracking and Monitoring/Alumni Liaison Officer

Collecting detailed apprentice destination data and identifying support needs at the end of the apprenticeship programme has helped LFE construct a range of partnerships and opportunities that benefit current and former apprentices. This work is conducted and managed by LFE’s Alumni Liaison Officer and continues for 3 years after apprentices leave the ASE programme.

Football Opportunities

Traditionally, LFE (in conjunction with the EFL and The PFA) has run Assessment Trials for players released at the end of their Apprenticeship and is committed to supporting players towards football opportunities post-apprenticeship.

Did you know...

PFA Education provides guidance and funding for educational and vocational courses that support personal development and transition towards a second career.
Progression

Higher Education/PASS4Soccer
Many apprentices are interested in entering higher education once they complete the ASE programme. This has to be carefully planned for, due to the deadlines in the application process defined by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). To help you in this process LFE has produced the ‘Guide to Higher Education Applications’ which can be downloaded via our website.

LFE has also established a partnership with PASS4Soccer, a consultancy that specialise in securing scholarships to USA Universities. For more information please see the HE & USA Scholarships Guide here:

www.lfe.org.uk/downloads/apprentice-downloads

Erasmus+ Placement Programme
LFE has utilised the Erasmus+ fund to enhance the Apprentice Journey and Progression opportunities for footballers. This funding has supported club pre-season trips to mainland Europe, as well as providing released players with personal development and footballing opportunities via a 12 week placement programme with partner European clubs. Over 200 players have gone on placement and over 80 players have earned professional contracts in Sweden and Spain as a result.

This season, 14 clubs will take their apprentices to the Netherlands and Spain on a pre-season trip via this initiative, while around 30 young players will take part in the player placement programme.

Opportunities Board
Leading employers, educators and training providers recognise the talent and abilities that apprentices can offer their organisation. LFE has a large network of partners that we can put apprentices in touch with for further information and advice.

LFE also utilise this network to provide specific job, training or education opportunities. As well as being directly communicated via e-mail these opportunities are posted on LFE’s Opportunities Board:

www.lfe.org.uk/progression/recruitment

Did you know...
Signing with a football agent may lead to a player becoming INELIGIBLE to represent a USA University soccer team.
Welcome to the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence

Celebrating Success

LFE celebrates the academic, football and wider achievements of apprentices throughout the two-year programme and beyond.

The 11, which is aligned to apprentice reviews, celebrates the holistic development of young players, with 44 apprentices being recognised each year for their outstanding efforts on and off the pitch. Many winners then go on to be shortlisted in their respective divisions at the EFL Awards for the LFE Apprentice of the Year.

Another award which celebrates the success and wider contributions of apprentices on the European Trips is the Mike Johnson Award.

The 11

The 11 is judged on academic and football progress, as well as other off the pitch factors, e.g. engaging in the football club’s community initiatives. This competition runs four times each season, with the likes of Dominic Calvert-Lewin (Sheffield United now Everton), Oli McBurnie (Bradford City now Swansea City), Jamie Shackleton (Leeds United) and Ben Wilmot (Stevenage now Watford) all previously appearing in this select group.

LFE Apprentice of the Year

Sponsored by LFE, an Apprentice of the Year Award is allocated to an apprentice player in each division at the annual English Football League Awards dinner.

This award celebrates the on and off the pitch achievements of apprentice players and is decided by a panel of expert judges.

Previous winners include Lewis Cook (Leeds United now AFC Bournemouth), Ademola Lookman (Charlton Athletic now Everton), Nick Powell (Crewe Alexandra now Wigan Athletic), Ryan Sessegnon (Fulham) and Connor Wickham (Ipswich Town now Crystal Palace).

Goal of the Month

LFE’s Goal of the Month competition highlights the very best goals scored by apprentice players up and down the land. With each month’s winner decided by a public vote, it regularly attracts thousands of online viewers. Check it out at www.lfe.org.uk/goal-of-the-month.
What about A Levels?

If an apprentice wishes to undertake A Level qualifications as the technical certificate he will need to have achieved either A or A* in the relevant subjects and hold a solid profile in other subjects.

A Levels can be difficult to timetable into the football training programme and not all A Levels provide underpinning knowledge towards the NVQ. LFE Regional Officers can offer more guidance on this subject.

What about claims for Child Benefit?

LFE has been informed by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) that following a review, parents/guardians of apprentices on the ASE programme in Football are not entitled to receive Child Benefit. This is because HMRC deem the Scholarship Agreement to be a Contract of Employment and therefore consider apprentices to be in employment (as opposed to the ‘non-employed’ status they were previously considered as), this makes apprentices ineligible for Child Benefit.

When will apprentices be told if they are being offered a pro contract?

On or before the third Saturday in May in the final year of his Scholarship/Apprenticeship Agreement the club will be required to give written notice to the scholar indicating whether or not upon expiry of his agreement it intends offering the scholar a professional contract and if so setting out the terms thereof. Apprentices should not expect to be told before April in year two of the programme, if they will be made the offer of a professional contract.

An agent has been in touch, is it a good idea for us to sign with him?

LFE advise holding discussions with The PFA before deciding on whether to sign with an agent. The PFA will be able to offer advice on the benefits or downsides of signing with an agent and the costs involved.

The function of an agent is to:

- Represent the client’s best interests
- Assist in negotiations with clubs
- Provide professional support and assistance with career and career development
- Arrange commercial deals
- Look after press/media issues if appropriate

Apprentices are not obliged to sign with an agent and could represent themselves, consult with a solicitor or work with a close family member (unpaid) when dealing with any of the issues above.

In addition, as a member of the PFA, apprentices will be entitled to free advice from the PFA who are able to provide hands-on representation in contract negotiations, give access to financial advice and offer a number of other free services that could be of benefit.

How do LFE ensure the quality of the ASE programme?

LFE’s quality manager oversees rigorous policies and procedures on all aspects of the programme. An annual Self-Assessment Report which includes feedback from all stakeholders, is produced against criteria of the Common Inspection Framework (Ofsted in England).

LFE’s extensive observation strategy includes qualified Ofsted inspectors observing external staff such as NVQ assessors, education provider tutors, Functional Skills tutors and club staff. LFE Regional Officers are also regularly observed performing key duties.

LFE continuously strives to improve the programme by listening to and acting upon feedback from apprentices, club staff and education provider personnel.
Contacts

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English Football League
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The Professional Footballers’ Association
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LFE Online

Visit
www.lfe.org.uk

Find out about Progression

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Results & Fixtures: The U18 Premier & Professional Development Leagues (05 February - 19 February 2019)

EFL Youth Alliance North West

Check the Academy results

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Welcome to the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence