



League
Football
Education

lfe.org.uk



Welcome to the

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

2024



Established by



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Welcome to the Apprenticeship Programme

The Apprenticeship programme offers each apprentice the chance to fulfil 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 young men 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 provides a supportive environment to encourage apprentices to thrive, while positive input from parents/ carers is also vitally important.

The transition from full-time education 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 their football alongside education.

We hope this booklet gives you a good introduction to LFE and answers many of your questions. However, a list of LFE contacts is available for you to approach and receive further guidance.



Sarah Stephen
Chief Executive

A word from Joe Thompson

I would like to offer a warm welcome to the world of full-time football and in particular to the Apprenticeship programme.

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, 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 undertake a Personal Development and Life Skills programme, in which I will be available to deliver workshops. 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



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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.



About LFE



Who is LFE?

LFE was established by The English Football League and The Professional Footballers' Association to deliver the Apprenticeship programme.

LFE has a network of staff working across the country dealing with club and college staff to support apprentices throughout their two years. LFE prides itself on providing an outstanding education programme that empowers learners to be successful in life.

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

Why is LFE here?

LFE delivers the SEP Apprenticeship programme on behalf of the EFL, to the vast majority of clubs. LFE is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, and The PFA. The education programme has been designed by our clubs in partnership with football authorities and government agencies.

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. Regional Officer and all LFE staff are here to ensure that apprentices are given the best chance possible to fully benefit from the Apprenticeship programme.

Your Regional Officer will 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.



Our Partners



The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)

The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) is the independent trade union for professional footballers in England. Founded in 1907, it is the world's oldest sports trade union. The PFA represents and provides independent support to all current and former professional footballers and scholars across the Premier League, EFL and WSL.

The union has an active membership of approximately 5,000 current professionals across these leagues, with a former members base of over 50,000 ex-professional players who retain access to and utilise PFA services and support.

The organisation exists solely to protect the rights of members and to provide support in both their professional and personal lives. It provides a range of core services, including:

- Legal advice and representation
- Wellbeing and mental health support
- Education and coaching grants
- Support around discrimination and equality issues.

It is highly recommended you join The PFA. The costs are £20 per year plus a one-off joining fee of £20. All PFA benefits and support services are available to apprentices.

Specialist wellbeing support for young players is also available via the PFA's network of therapeutic counsellors, and 24/7 welfare support is accessible via our helpline (**07500 000 777**). The PFA's online Safety Net service also provides apprentices with helpful, accessible information related to all aspects of the academy system.

For free, independent support and guidance, contact the PFA via your club representative, or email info@thepfa.com

(+44) 0330 236 8850

www.thepfa.com



English Football League (EFL)

History

Formed in 1888 by its 12 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 highs 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 Conference League.

A second midweek competition, the Bristol Street Motors 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 and key strategic aim to help create more additional playing opportunities for young homegrown players, with circa £100million invested in Youth Development within EFL Clubs each season, covering education, coach development, sports science, medical support and provision of quality playing facilities.

In the 2022/23 EFL season, 82% of team sheets featured at least one homegrown player. Over 10,000 appearances (21%) were made by players ages 21 and under throughout the season, including over 6,700 starts (19%).

The EFL is vital to the football pyramid. Many top players have started their careers at EFL clubs/academies, developing their playing skills in EFL competitions, including the Carabao Cup and Bristol Street Motors Trophy. 23 members of England's World Cup 2022 squad either played in the EFL, came through an EFL academy or made their debut in an EFL competition.

The EFL recognises that not all young players who come through their academies will succeed in getting a professional contract or having a prolonged professional career, so provisions are in place which help to prepare each individual for a life outside of professional sport, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in other areas. The EFL is committed to ensuring that involvement in the academy system is a safe and positive experience and has measures in place to help.

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.

DID YOU KNOW

The PFA looks after more than 5,000 current members and 50,000 former members worldwide.

Keeping you informed

LFE is committed to supporting all apprentices throughout and beyond their two-year apprenticeships.

LFE has developed a number of channels to engage everyone associated with the apprenticeship programme.

The website and social media channels are the first port of call for the latest news.

LFE tackles all areas from apprenticeship related issues to coverage of all the U18 Leagues - incorporating fixtures, results and league tables.

Digital and Social Media

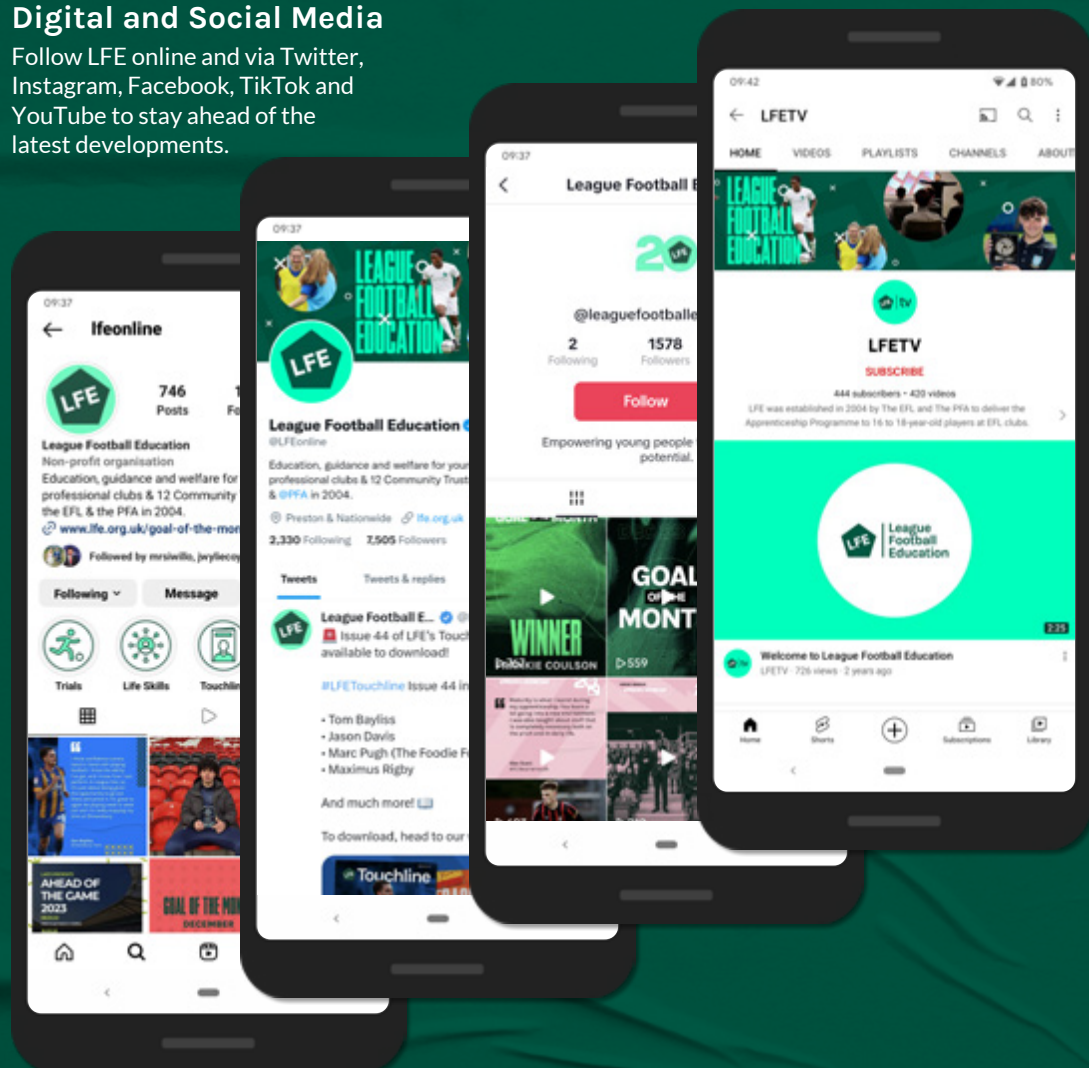
Follow LFE online and via Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube to stay ahead of the latest developments.

LFETV showcases the Goal of the Month competition, which features the best goals from all the Academy Leagues and attracts over 25,000 viewers each season.

LFE utilises an e-learning platform to manage the education programme and to provide players with useful guidance and information on a variety of life challenges such as well-being, discrimination and finance.

Publications

Publications include Touchline - a 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 and Club Testimonials



Ashley Phillips
Blackburn Rovers
(Now at Tottenham Hotspur)



Ashley Phillips has enjoyed an impressive transition into senior football since completing his LFE Apprenticeship Programme with Blackburn Rovers. The England U19's captain made his first team debut for Rovers at the beginning of the 2022/23 season and subsequently went onto make a name for himself as a rising star in the Championship.

However, it wasn't just his performances on the pitch that caught the eye. At the 2022/23 EFL Awards, Phillips was named LFE Championship Apprentice of the Season, an accolade that also recognises an apprentice's commitment in the classroom, not just on the field. The young centre back achieved a triple distinction in his BTEC Extended Diploma.

"It's all about planning, making sure you're one step ahead. Planning around your training, making sure you get the work done because ultimately the classroom work is as important as the football. You want to be performing off the field as well as on it, so make a good plan and stick to it."

"Character of mind is 'I want to be the best of the best', not just on the pitch, I wanted to top all the marks in my education."



Joel Bonner
Shrewsbury Town
(Now First Team Performance Analyst at Liverpool FC)



Former Shrewsbury Town apprentice Joel Bonner is now working as a First Team Performance Analyst at his boyhood club Liverpool FC, after graduating from Loughborough University in 2022.

"The apprenticeship is well designed in terms of encouraging us to balance education alongside football. The opportunity to go to university was something that excited me, and I received plenty of help with submitting my UCAS application, which meant it wasn't such a stressful situation when I did get released."

I really feel like I can be a leader and help others around me. These skills also transfer onto the pitch because now I always want to motivate my teammates.



Javon Marquis
Sutton United
Apprentice



Sutton United apprentice Javon Marquis has already had to overcome obstacles during his short career so far. Being born with dyslexia and a speech impediment made certain aspects of his childhood and daily life more challenging than usual. However, since joining Sutton as a first-year scholar, the marauding full-back is now excelling.

"My leadership and communication has massively improved since I began my apprenticeship here."

"I was really shy, and I never wanted to speak out, but with the work that we do in class, the lessons and workshops that are put on for us, I really feel like I can be a leader and help others around me. These skills also transfer onto the pitch because now I always want to motivate my teammates."



Austin McIntosh
Mansfield Town
(Now joint owner of The Fitness Club)



After being part of the first ever LFE Apprenticeship cohort between 2004 and 2006, Austin McIntosh was released by Mansfield Town. He is now a personal trainer working with The Fitness Club.

"One trait I've carried with me through life from my time as an apprentice is belief. Believing that I can go on and do something special."

"One thing no one can take away from you is your education. It was very important for me to continue my education. Having qualifications under your belt gives you the edge. Education is massive, and not only for the qualifications you will get from it. The skills you learn through meeting new people are crucial."



Gareth Owen
Academy Director
at Stoke City



At Stoke City, the individual is at the heart of everything we do and the Academy has departmental key performance indicators incorporating coaching, education, player care and sports science to check and measure itself. The Apprenticeship Programme is fundamental to this and helps to prepare our young players for life itself and not just football.

The number one aim of the academy is to develop players for our First Team and a career in Professional Football but we understand that not every player will achieve this, and so we have a moral obligation to ensure young people maximise their time with us. I feel the apprenticeship programme ensures this takes place and, in conjunction with the excellent work the LFE undertakes every year, allows the player to broaden his horizons, stay grounded and appreciate the opportunities that may lie in front of him.

Whilst we are proud of our Academy Graduates who have gone on to make first team appearances, we are equally delighted that two of our former scholars are employed in coaching roles within the Club. They took the first steps in Coaching through the Apprenticeship programme and will go on to make outstanding coaches for the future.

Ultimately, though, a player is in charge of his own development and we can only facilitate his development. What we can do though is try to make people better players and make players better people.



Elliot Tyler
Head of Education
& Player Support
Ipswich Town



The SEP apprenticeship provides a vital structure for our under-18 players. As a category 2 academy we have a pathway available to the first team that takes players from the under-16 hybrid programme through to the under-21's. Every player who joins us full-time has access to the SEP apprenticeship, which incorporates relevant areas of the role of a professional footballer. Alongside the apprenticeship, we've been able to offer a wide range of qualifications to our young players including BTEC Extended Diploma, A-levels, UEFA coaching awards and refereeing courses.

Our multi-disciplinary team, which includes our medical, sports science, coaching and analytical departments, work with the scholars on the apprenticeship to help them develop, as a player and a person, and provide the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they need to evidence on the SEP.

We are proud to help our young student athletes evolve across the two years, preparing them for the next step in their lives. This could be into our senior playing group, moving to another club, playing part-time alongside a parallel career or going to university here or in the States. This programme gives student athletes a chance to fulfil their potential whilst building their portfolio of 'on the job' training.

Apprenticeship Programme

This section gives a brief outline of the components to make up the Apprenticeship programme and the process that is undertaken to ensure that apprentices' individual needs are identified and met over the course of the two-year programme.

LFE is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to deliver the Apprenticeship programme.

In addition, LFE also receives funding from its partners to provide wider opportunities to apprentices. A conceptual diagram of the programme is outlined below.



Apprenticeship Programme

Initial Assessment

Initial assessments are carried out with every apprentice to establish academic ability. LFE Regional Officers will undertake initial assessments.

The assessment process will be carried out between April and July, and will enable the apprentice to be placed on the most appropriate educational programme based upon expected GCSE results.

Final Assessment

A second meeting 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 provides each club with a set of standard induction units that includes the following topics:

- Education programme
- Employment rights and responsibilities
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Health and safety
- Club rules and regulations
- Anti-doping
- Safeguarding
- Apprentice well-being

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 goals to work towards during the next period for each apprentice. Regional Officers are responsible for coordinating this process. Review comments will be collated in the following areas:

- Employer/club
- Sporting Excellence Professional (completed by the Tutor Assessor)
- BTEC Sporting Excellence and Performance
- Functional Skills English and Maths (completed by Functional Skills tutor if appropriate)

The Regional Officer will use the collected information to discuss progress and overall development of the apprentice.

Review Cycle

Reviews will be conducted at regular intervals throughout the apprenticeship. It is essential that apprentices are available for reviews, and meetings should be rearranged if missed.

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.

It is essential that apprentices are available for reviews, and meetings should be rearranged if missed.

The Football Development Programme

- Pre-Season Training - This period of time is used to ensure that the apprentice is fully prepared for the start of the season.
- Football Training - This will include work on technical and tactical skills, physical conditioning and psychology.
- Football Coaching.
- Apprentices will follow their club's specific coaching programme and philosophy over the next two years.

Education

The educational programme has been specifically designed for elite athletes and includes nationally recognised qualifications.

For the vast majority, the educational programme will consist of the following elements:

- Sporting Excellence Professional (Level 3)
- Academic Education (Level 3)
- Functional Skills (Level 2)
- Certificate in Coaching (UEFA C Diploma)



Apprenticeship Programme

Sporting Excellence Professional (Level 3)

LFE apprentices will undertake the Sporting Excellence Professional Apprenticeship Standard.

The Sporting Excellence Professional Apprenticeship Standard is designed to equip young footballers with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for a career in professional football.

The key activities of an Apprentice on the Sporting Excellence Professional are to:

- effectively and successfully represent their employer on the field of play at a local, regional, national or international level
- undertake a daily training routine, supported by a multi-disciplinary team, to ensure they retain and develop the technical, tactical, physical and psychological skills necessary for performing at the professional level
- practice a lifestyle conducive to maintaining a high level of performance
- act as an ambassador for their employer, sport and governing body in relation to younger players, fans and the local community – including their approach to diversity, equality and inclusion
- actively plan for life after their sporting career and to supplement the next phase of playing contract.

Core Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours

- Technical performance – the movement and skills that underpin techniques required to play professional football.
- Tactical performance – understanding strategy and approach to professional football.
- Technical/tactical performance includes the ability to use technology to interpret and compare different forms of analysis in training and competition.
- Physical performance – development of physical capabilities to apply in a professional environment.
- Injury and risk management.
- Effective, safe and inclusive practice.
- Anti-doping.
- Nutritional performance.
- Psychological and emotional performance – the ability to cope with the psychological demands of a sport in order to perform at an optimum level.
- Communication.
- Lifestyle and personal development.
- Career and self-development.
- Integrated approach to performance – the active combination of all disciplines that contribute equally to achieve high performance.
- Behaviours, professionalism and values.

Knowledge Test

The knowledge test should be taken as early as possible in the three-month period of the End Point Assessment.

The test will be comprised of 40 mandatory multiple-choice questions and six scenario-based questions. The knowledge test is graded as fail, pass or distinction.

Apprentices will have 90 minutes to complete the knowledge test, which will be closed book – i.e. the apprentice cannot refer to reference books or materials.

Practical Observation

The apprentice must be observed by an independent assessor undertaking a range of day-to-day tasks as part of their regular working patterns and training/match play schedules.

The practical observations should include the following:

- Practical training session (60 minutes)
- Data analysis session and video showcase (45 minutes)
- Question and answer session with the independent assessor (45 minutes).

Professional Interview Supported by a Portfolio of Evidence

The professional interview is a structured discussion between the apprentice and an independent assessor. The interview must last for 90 minutes, although additional interview time may be granted for apprentices with appropriate needs.

This will be supported by a portfolio of evidence, all of which will be developed while on programme, which should typically contain 22 pieces of discrete evidence. Examples of evidence are:

- individual learning and development plans
- witness testimonies
- poster presentations
- video analysis of match play
- digital storytelling
- training logs.

END POINT ASSESSMENT (EPA)

The End Point Assessment consists of three distinct assessment methods.

- A knowledge test with multiple-choice questions and scenario-based questions.
- A practical observation with questions and answers.
- A professional interview, supported by a portfolio of evidence.

Apprenticeship Programme

All apprentices are required to complete 20% of their learning through off-the-job hours. This is the academic part of the apprenticeship that allows learners to gain recognised qualifications.

Academic Education

The BTEC programmes have been specifically designed to mirror the topics on the SEP so apprentices can maximise their knowledge about key topics that impact on their career.

There are three BTEC qualification sizes:

BTEC National Extended Certificate
(360 Guided Learning Hours)

Includes three mandatory units.

BTEC National Diploma
(720 Guided Learning Hours)

BTEC National Extended Diploma
(1080 Guided Learning Hours)

Apprentices must be willing to commit to independent study, over and above their normal education sessions in the club. The additional units required for the Extended Diploma will be completed remotely with support from club staff.

Course Length and Duration

The Extended Certificate, Diploma and Extended Diploma will be completed over two years.

DID YOU KNOW

As a rough guide, when making a university application...

Extended Diploma = 3 x A-Levels

Diploma = 2 x A-Levels

Extended Certificate = 1 x A-Level

BTEC Units

Unit (number and title)	Unit size (GLH)	Extended Certificate (360 GLH)	Diploma (720 GLH)	Extended Diploma (1080 GLH)
A Careers in the Sport and Active Leisure Industry	90	M	M	M
B Health, Wellbeing and Sport	90	M	M	M
C1 Developing Coaching Skills	180			O
C3 Professional Sports Performer	180	M	M	M
D3 Applied Anatomy and Physiology for Professional Performance	180		M	M
E Research Project in Sport (Pearson-set)	120		O	M
1 Sports Development	60		O	O
4 Nutrition for Physical Performance	60		M	M
7 Functional Sports Massage	60		O	O
11 Rules, Regulations and Officiating in Sport	60		O	O
13 Influence of Technology in Sport	60		O	O
22 Sports Law and Legislation	60		O	O
23 Psychology for Professional Sports Performance	60		O	M

A-Levels

If an apprentice wishes to undertake A-Level qualifications, they will need their respective LFE Regional Officer and club Head of Education to complete an approval form.

A-Levels can be difficult to timetable into the football training programme. The club's Head of Education and LFE Regional Officers can offer more guidance on this subject.

LFE's minimum entry criteria is the following:

- Five GCSE's at grade 7 or above, with one GCSE at grade 8 or 9.
- English (Language or Literature) OR Maths at grade 7 or above (can be included in the required five).
- Grade 7 or above in the A-Level subject(s) that they wish to study (exceptions may apply).

Expectations for the Apprentice:

- Attend classes
- Complete coursework as required
- Hit targets that are set
- To contact their Regional Officer if they have any concern.



Apprenticeship Programme

Functional Skills

These are Level 2 qualifications in English and maths that must be passed if GCSE English and/or maths are not achieved in school at Grade 4 or above. Functional Skills (FS) must be passed before an apprentice can go through the End Point Assessment process of the Sporting Excellence Professional (SEP).

Course Length and Duration

The length of the course depends on the number of topics that each learner needs to cover, but ideally it will be completed within the first year of the apprenticeship. Some will complete in less than 10 hours, whereas others will need the whole year for the content they need to cover. FS courses are tailored to the individual.

Good communication skills will help you to make a valuable contribution on and off the pitch, and in whatever happens in the future. During your course, you will have many opportunities to practise and develop these skills in a range of different settings, including:

- in media interviews
- in post-match analysis sessions
- on the pitch
- in class
- in one-to-one sessions with psychologists, physiotherapists, analysts.

Assessment

FS assessments are all taken online, on demand. This means that when an apprentice is ready, they can take assessments. Results are back in within 20 working days.

Maths assessments are 25 minutes for test A and 90 minutes for test B.

English Reading assessments are 75 minutes.

English Writing assessments are 60 minutes.

English Speaking Listening and Communication is internally assessed for approximately 30 minutes.

English and maths skills development will continue, as appropriate for you, for the duration of your course, to ensure that you maintain or improve the skills learned in school.

Well-structured writing will allow a tutor to see more easily how you have met the BTEC criteria. You will be supported to develop your writing, to be an efficient writer, and to make minimal spelling, punctuation and grammar errors.

Reading and referencing skills will be used and developed as you do research and include quotations, summaries or images formally in your work.

UEFA C Diploma (Certificate in Coaching)

As part of the programme, each apprentice will also undertake the FA UEFA C Diploma. This includes units on the:

- player
- coach
- environment
- game.

Course Length and Duration

The course will comprise of:

- a mixture of blended learning with theory and practical training
- child protection
- first aid
- coaching hours
- formative and summative assessment.

Aims and Objectives of the UEFA C Diploma

The coaching qualification underpins the work that each apprentice completes on the Level 3 Sporting Excellence Professional and allows apprentices to:

- develop an appreciation of the ethical coaching process
- develop an understanding around coaching philosophy, communication, managing difference and player well-being
- 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

Apprentices will complete an online first aid workshop 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 the Coaching Qualification

The coaching certificate 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

Maths is **EVERYWHERE** in football. You will continue to practise maths related to your role as a footballer in the gym, with nutrition, statistics and data analysis to name just a few areas.

You will also access personalised maths resources on an online learning platform to help you to continue to develop your maths skills.

Apprenticeship Programme

Wages

At the time of writing, the current national minimum wage rates for apprentices is as follows:

- £6.40 per hour from April 2024 - the rate for apprentices aged 16-18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year as an apprentice
- £8.60 per hour for an apprentice aged 19 in the second year of their apprenticeship.

All clubs will operate their apprenticeship programmes on a minimum 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 £9.99 per day from April 2024.

In line with 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.

In line with English Football League (EFL) Rules on Youth Development and current legislation, clubs shall, in all dealings with apprentices, adopt a proactive and integrated approach to safeguarding apprentices' welfare for the purpose of safeguarding apprentices' welfare.

Change of Circumstances

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

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.

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.

Termination for Disciplinary Reasons

Page 27 outlines the standard disciplinary procedures that should be imposed on apprentices who breach either club regulations or the code of discipline concerning college attendance.



Change in 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 three 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 19th 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.

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

ARRANGING A PERMANENT MOVE

Permanent transfer of 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

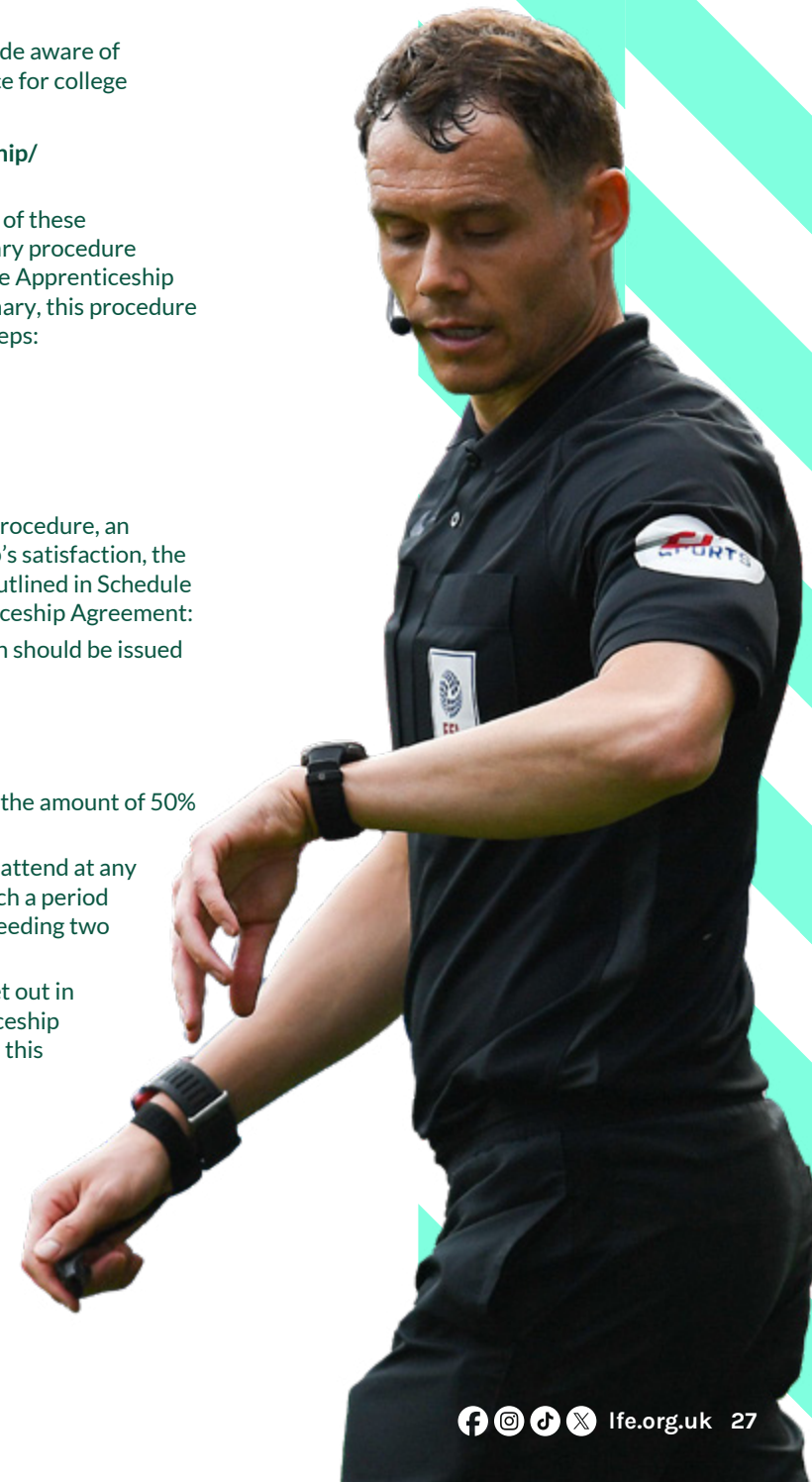
Should any apprentice fall foul of these regulations, then the disciplinary procedure outlined in Schedule Two of the Apprenticeship Agreement will apply. In summary, this procedure involves the following three steps:

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.



Discipline

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 left)
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 EFL, The FA 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.

Attendance at Educational Sessions

As a condition of our funding from the ESFA, it is obligatory for all apprentices to attend their education 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 these.

Apprentices, if injured, must not miss their academic work to receive routine treatment at the club.

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.

Code of Discipline Concerning Education Attendance

The following regulations are in place regarding attendance at education sessions:

1. LFE reserves the right to remove an apprentice from the education programme if they miss 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 during sessions may be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined on page 27.
3. Apprentices who do not hand in written work set by their Tutors may be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined on page 27.

Safeguarding

LFE aims 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 subscribes to The Football Association's safeguarding strategy 'Building an Ever-Safer Culture'. The key principles of the strategy 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:

- www.lfe.org.uk/safeguarding
- www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children
- www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding
- www.thepfa.com/players/youth-advisory/safeguarding



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

LFE has a wide range of strategies to support the learner and the club during the Apprenticeship programme to ensure that every apprentice receives Equality of Opportunity.

Our Position & Commitment

LFE is fully committed to a policy of Equality of Opportunity and aims 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, LFE is dedicated to ensuring that every apprentice is treated fairly and is encouraged to develop to his full potential in all aspects of his education and 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 inclusion with apprentices during progress reviews to monitor their understanding and experience. Clubs and apprentices will be able to access a wide range of support provided by LFE, from induction, to transition.

During the year LFE will provide all stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on how we manage the education 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 inclusion.

In addition, LFE continues to work with Kick It Out, Stonewall, Holocaust Educational Trust, Muslim Chaplains In Sport, The EFL and The PFA to deliver anti-discrimination training at football clubs which includes reporting and support.

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

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

Useful Websites

- www.acas.org.uk
- www.equalityhumanrights.com
- www.kickitout.org
- www.ofsted.gov.uk
- www.thefa.com
- www.mcst.org.uk
- www.het.org.uk

Health and Safety

Process to be followed in case of injury:

- 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 EFL 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.



Personal Development, Life Skills and Transition

League Football Education wants more for apprentices than successful achievement of the apprenticeship programme - we support the development of well-rounded people.

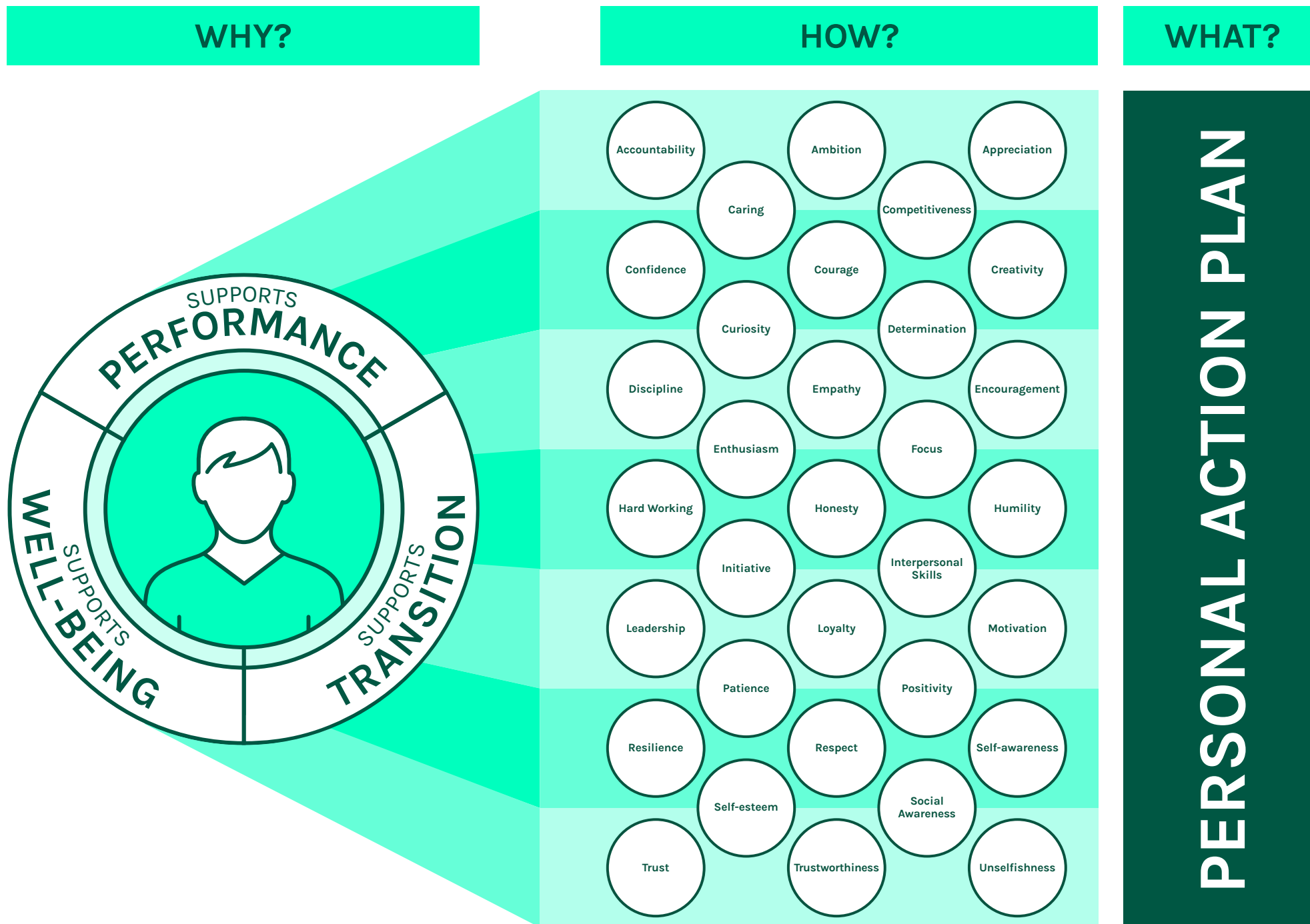
Those who embrace personal development as well as alternative interests, employment, education or training, equip themselves to excel as footballers and for life off-the-field.

Personal Development

LFE's personal development model provides a framework for planning and delivering this wider development.

Player Care

The education and support provided across personal development and transition forms part of the player care agenda. The definition of player care is the adoption of a holistic approach to personal and sporting development, supporting academy players to achieve their potential in and out of football. All academies have a mandatory full-time staff position to deliver player care support with this role proactively taking steps to improve the experience of academy players and their families.



Personal Development and Life Skills

League Football Education provides information, advice and guidance for personal development. Through face-to-face delivery and resources, apprentices receive opportunities to support their performance, well-being and transition.

Personal Development Model

LFE's personal development model provides a framework for club staff and apprentices to understand the process for holistic development and its supportive outcomes.

Mentoring

LFE's six-session mentoring programme introduces personal development and identity, expands on opportunities for developing characteristic skills and supports individuals in their own goal-setting process. Delivered by a former professional athlete, there is insight to career challenges and masterclasses on transferable skills.

Life Skills

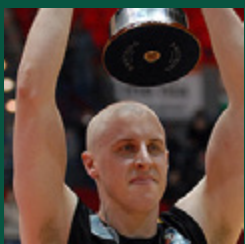
League Football Education is committed to providing life skills-based education relevant to the world of a young person in a sporting environment.

LFE's Life Skills Programme aims to raise awareness and empower apprentices with knowledge and skills to deal with the demands of football and life.

The programme delivers practical advice across different aspects of well-being, such as emotional, financial, mental, occupational, physical, social and spiritual. This is provided through face-to-face and webinar delivery, online modules and resources.

Some examples of the topics covered are criminal law, emotional well-being, discrimination, faith, finance, mental skills, sexual health and consent, social media, road safety and lifestyle education on key subjects such as gaming, gambling, alcohol and drugs.

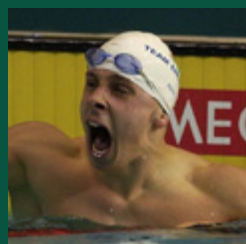
Personal Development Mentors



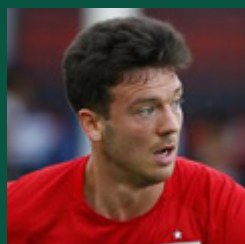
Dru Spinks



Mark Roberts



Adam Whitehead



Jack Rutter



Linvoy Primus



Rory Winters



Bobby Copping



Tobi-Sho Silva

Transition

League Football Education defines 'Transition' as the ability to deal with and move through life challenges, which includes career pathways in and out of football.

LFE will support your journey by providing:

Transition Officer

A dedicated, qualified person providing transition information, advice and guidance.

LFE Transition, Careers & Education Workshops

LFE provides apprentices & club staff access to a selection of Transition, Careers & Higher Education related workshops as part of LFE's transition programme. These can be accessed and booked by club staff via LFE's Delivery Request System.

Tracking, Monitoring and Support Programme

A proactive programme contacting all apprentices on completion of the apprenticeship programme and for three years afterwards. It will gather information on what support you need and at the same time offer information, advice and guidance.

Career Opportunities

Employers, educators and training providers recognise the characteristics and skills that apprentices can offer their organisations.

League Football Education has built strong partnerships with a variety of different organisations - from employers to leading universities in the UK and USA.

LFE apprentices and alumni have access to LAPS - Ahead of The Game careers events. Supported by LFE, the Premier League and the PFA, these events are designed to help players plan for careers and opportunities both alongside football and after football.

START

A dedicated online career guidance tool for you to access whenever you want. More information on how to utilise the resource is available on the LFE website.



Transition

Football Opportunities

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

All LFE apprentices are eligible to attend the Premier League & LFE PDP Preparation Programme. This residential five-day programme will provide an elite training experience where players will benefit from a range of Personal Development & Transition support.

LFE have partnered with Pro Player Pathways who combine global football opportunities with education. All players continue to work towards a career as a professional footballer in a variety of countries. We provide opportunities for players to play in the USA, Canada, South America, across Europe, Dubai, South-East Asia and Australia. These global football opportunities provide a platform for players to continue to progress as footballers whilst they also work towards an alternative career.

chris.hirst@vluke.org
ProPlayerPathways@gmail.com

Higher Education/USA Scholarships

Many apprentices are interested in entering Higher Education once they complete their apprenticeship programme.

This has to be carefully planned for UCAS application deadlines. To help you with this, LFE has produced a 'Guide to Higher Education Applications' which can be downloaded via our website.

LFE has also established a partnership with **FirstPoint USA** - a consultancy that specialise in securing scholarships to USA universities.

For more information, please see the HE and USA Scholarship Guides:

www.lfe.org.uk/usa-scholarships
www.lfe.org.uk/higher-education



Celebrating Success

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

The 11

The 11, which is aligned to apprentice reviews, celebrates the holistic development of young players, with 33 apprentices being recognised each year for their outstanding efforts on and off the pitch. This competition runs three times each season, with the likes of Oli McBurnie (Bradford City) and Max Lowe (Derby County) both now Sheffield United, Ademola Lookman (Charlton Athletic) now Atalanta, and Jordan Adebayo-Smith (Lincoln City) now Minnesota FC in the MLS, all previously appearing in this select group.

LFE Apprentice of the Season

Sponsored by LFE, an Apprentice of the Season Award is allocated to an apprentice player in each league 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 Ashley Phillips (Blackburn Rovers now Tottenham Hotspur), Luke Matheson (Rochdale now Bolton Wanderers), Junior Tchamadeu (Colchester United now Stoke City) and Jude Bellingham (Birmingham City now Real Madrid).

Goal of the Month

LFE's Goal of the Month competition highlights the very best goals scored by apprentice players across the country. 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



Additional Information

Child Benefit

Parents/guardians of apprentices on the Apprenticeship programme are not entitled to receive child benefit from HMRC.

This is because apprentices are in employment (as opposed to the 'non-employed' status they were previously considered as), which makes apprentices ineligible for child benefit.

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 to offer 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.

Intermediaries/Agents

LFE advises 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.

Quality Assurance

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 the criteria of Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework.

LFE's quality assurance strategy includes using experienced and qualified consultants to conduct independent quality checks at clubs. This includes observing delivery staff both at the club and in the classroom. Focus groups with apprentices are also facilitated during the visit to gauge how the programme is impacting development.

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 all stakeholders.

THE PFA SAFETY NET

HELPING YOUNG PLAYERS WITH THE CHALLENGES OF PLAYING ACADEMY FOOTBALL



FIND OUT MORE

PFA.OUR-SAFETY.NET

REGISTER TO ACCESS CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE, SUPPORT & VIDEOS

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E. info@lfe.org.uk

English Football League
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Preston PR1 8HU
T. 01772 325800
F. 01772 325801

The Professional Footballers' Association
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Bishopsgate
Manchester M2 3WQ
T. 0161 236 0575

The Football Association
Wembley Stadium
Wembley
London HA9 0WS
T. 0844 980 8200

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LFE Online

Visit www.lfe.org.uk

The screenshot shows the LFE Online website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Apprentice Programme', 'Personal Development', 'News & Media', 'Community Trust Study Programme', 'About LFE', and 'Contact LFE'. A search icon and 'EMS Login' are also present. Below the navigation is a large banner with the LFE logo and the text 'League Football Education'. A callout box says 'Find out about Transition'. Below the banner is a section for 'LATEST NEWS' with three articles: 'Shrewsbury Youngsters Donate Books to Local Library', 'EFL Awards | LFE Apprentice of the Season 2024 Nominations', and 'Celebration Friday | National Apprenticeship Week'. A callout box says 'Read all the latest news updates from LFE'. At the bottom, there is a 'Watch LFE TV' section with a video player showing 'Goal of the Month December/Jan...' and a 'Check the Academy results' section with a 'LEAGUE TABLE' for 'EFL Youth Alliance North West 2023-24'.

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