**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**CLEAR QUALITY LTD**

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**Introduction**

We understand that you may have questions about our services, products, and processes. Whether you’re exploring our website for the first time, considering using our services, or already a valued client, we’re here to provide clarity and support.

This FAQ document is designed to address the most common enquirieswe receive, offering you quick and easy access to essential information.

If your question isn’t covered here, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us directly at info@clearquality.co.uk or using the contact us form on the main page of our website– we’re here to help!

**Training**

***Training: Apprenticeships***

What is the time commitment?

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) states that every learner enrolled on a programme must engage in 24 hours off-the-job-learning, to be logged monthly. This learning can be carried out at any time mutually agreed upon by the employer and the apprentice, the only stipulation being that it must be done within the apprentice’s regular working hours.

What is the delivery style?

We uniquely deliver all our Apprenticeships online, using technology for flexible and accessible learning. Our delivery includes:

* **Monthly Lecture:** Four-hour sessions led by subject experts, recorded for any time access.
* **Flexible Assignments and Learning:** Through our EOS platform, apprentices’ complete assignments, guided learning, and wider learning activities within each 4-week block, on a schedule that suits both apprentice and employer.
* **Personal Support:** Every 8 weeks, apprentices receive bi-monthly 1-on-1 reviews with their mentor, with additional sessions available as needed, ensuring tailored support throughout the programme.

How frequently are new cohorts for each course run?

New cohorts for each course are typically launched quarterly. However, the schedule is flexible and may vary based on demand. We recommend checking our website or contacting us directly for the most current information on upcoming cohort start dates.

Training: Short courses

Are the short courses accredited?

Clear Quality Ltd is an accredited centre with the NCFE. Although not all our courses have NCFE accreditation, some do. To check if your course is NCFE accredited, please click here - [Short Courses | Clear Quality](https://www.clearquality.co.uk/training/short-courses)

How are they delivered?

Our training sessions are usually held online using Microsoft Teams, offering flexibility and accessibility. However, we also provide the option for face-to-face training, depending on various factors such as the number of delegates and the location. This approach allows us to tailor the delivery method to best suit the needs of our participants and ensure the most effective learning environment.

**Compliance**

***Compliance: Century Software***

What is Functional Skills?

Functional skills are Level 2 qualifications in English and Math. To enrol on an apprenticeship without fulfilling the functional skills requirement, you need to present “exemption certificates” evidencing your existing qualifications.

What is CenturyTech?

CenturyTech is a leading learning platform utilised by Clear Quality Ltd. We use it to conduct initial assessments and manage the functional skills aspects of our apprenticeships. It supports us in delivering a personalised and effective learning experience to our learners.

If I have already sent through my functional skills exemption certificates, do I still need to complete my initial assessments on century?

Yes, it is necessary to complete your initial assessment on Century even if you have submitted your functional skills exemption certificates. This is due to it being a mandatory part of the ESFA Apprenticeship enrolment process and is therefore distinct from the exemption documentation.

Why do I need to complete my initial assessments?

By completing your initial assessment, your tutor can get a deeper insight into your current skill level and tailor delivery appropriately to meet your specific needs.

What is a nugget on Century?

A nugget represents a concise and digestible unit of learning within Century's platform. These 'bite-size' portions of information are designed to break down complex learning modules into manageable segments.

***Compliance: EOS***

What is Clear Quality Ltd’s EOS system?

EOS is the all-in-one system supporting your apprenticeship journey with us. It encompasses assignment submission, guided learning, progress reviews, off-the-job-log maintenance, and the signing of enrolment documents and training plans. It also gives you another method of communication with your tutor through direct messaging.

Where do I find the documents, I need to sign?

All outstanding documents will be listed within the “inbox” tab on your left toolbar of your profile.

***Compliance: Panda.Doc***

What is a Panda.Doc and is it reliable?

Panda.doc is a secure software we use for collecting signatures. If you receive an email from Panda.Doc in your inbox, rest assured it is from our compliance team and is safe for handling your sensitive information.

***Compliance: The Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) account***

What is a DAS account?

The DAS account is an online portal provided by the UK Government to aid employers with managing their apprenticeships. Through this portal, employers can view information on their levy payments and manage their apprenticeship levy funds.

How do you set up a DAS account?

1. Login to your DAS.
2. Click into “Your Training Providers”
3. Click “Add a Training Provider”
4. Then add Clear Quality Ltd’s UKPRN “10083883”
5. Then click “Yes, add CLEAR QUALITY LIMITED” and continue.
6. Click the green “return to your training providers”
7. Next to Clear Quality – click the set permissions tab.
8. Click “allow” for both sections and continue and then confirm.

***Compliance: The Levy***

What is the apprenticeship levy?

The Levy is a UK Government initiative that requires employers with a payroll of more the £3 million per year to contribute 0.5% of their total payroll into a fund. This fund is then used to finance apprenticeship programmes, aiming to enhance skills and employment. Any money paid into the Levy Is topped up by the Government by a further 10%.

How can I assess my Levy pot?

Employers can access their contributions through the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) account to pay for Apprenticeship training and assessments.

What if I don’t pay the Levy tax?

If you do not pay the levy tax, it means your payroll is below the £3 million threshold set by the UK Government. Despite this, you can still engage in apprenticeships by covering 5% of the training and assessment costs, with the Government funding the remaining 95%. This arrangement allows businesses not paying the levy to still benefit from apprenticeship programs.

***Compliance: The Employer Contribution***

What is the Employer Contribution and how is it paid?

The “Employer Contribution” refers to the mandatory 5% payment that small and medium sized businesses (SME’s) make towards funding their Apprenticeship programmes. This can be paid in monthly instalments or as a lump sum two months after the delegate’s start date.

**ISO Consultancy**

What is the time commitment?

The time required to implement an ISO standard varies and depends on several factors, including your businesses’ size, scope, process, the site(s) that need to be covered and the specific standard you aim to adopt. To provide a clear timeframe, our consultants will conduct a gap analysis at the outset, assessing your current operations against the standards requirements. This analysis enables us to offer a tailored estimate for the implementation process.

How much commitment is required from me (client)?

The level of commitment required from you varies based on the system you choose to implement. While there is no one-size-fits-all answer, our consultants will guide you through the process, providing regular updates and timelines for necessary actions. Active involvement from your side will significantly hasten the process and outcome.

How many audits will I need to have?

The number of audits your business requires largely depends on its size. However, before undergoing an external third-party audit, it is strongly recommended that you conduct internal audits of all your core processes. This preparation ensures your business is in the best possible position for the external audit. To assist in this, your consultant will work closely with you. They can provide the necessary training or even undertake these internal audits on your behalf, ensuring that your business is compliant and fully prepared for the third-party audit.

Why do we need Health and Safety when looking at Quality?

Health and Safety are legally mandated for businesses with more than five employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAW Act) and is also foundational to achieving high quality in products or services. A safe working environment ensures that employees can perform their duties under optimal conditions, which in turn enhances the overall quality of work. It is about creating a culture that prioritises well-being, leading to better outcomes and satisfaction for both employees and customers.

**Funding**

How much funding can I receive from my apprenticeship?

How much funding you receive will depend on whether you are a Levy payer or not. Please see below:

* Non-Levy Companies: 95%
* Levy Companies: Paid with the money in their Levy pot.

Can I receive funding for my ISO standard?

There may be funding available for implementing your management system, however, this depends on your industry, the standard you are implementing, the size of your business, location, and the political landscape.

Is there any funding towards the short courses?

Generally, these courses do not receive the same funding as Apprenticeships. However, availability of funding may vary based on factors like your location, the specific course and requirements, and changes in the political landscape.

For further information regarding funding, please contact info@clearquality.co.uk

**ISO Certification**

What is the difference between UKAS (UK Accreditation Service) and ASCB (Accreditation Services for Certification?

The key difference between UKAS and ASCB, is that ASCB are an independent organisation which means they are not approved or affiliated with Government, nor have they been appointed as, or affiliated with, the UK’s National Accreditation Body UKAS.

However, via Clear Quality Ltd, there is no difference in the level of quality provided with our certification body as we still operate to the 17021 standard that is also required of UKAS certification bodies.

How do I know whether I need a UKAS certificate or an ASCB certificate?

The choice of accreditation depends largely on the specific requirements of your clients and consumers. Many opt for the UKAS pathway as it is often a prerequisite for becoming an approved supplier.

If you find yourself uncertain about which accreditation best suits your organisations needs, get in touch with us today, our team of experts are here to offer support and guidance in deciding on the route for your organisational objectives.

What standards can Clear Quality Ltd certify?

Our certification body can certify ISO9001, ISO14001, ISO27001, ISO45001, and ISO21001.

Will my audit be onsite or remote?

Given the intricate nature of our audits, a site visit is essential to accurately assess certain aspects of your business operations. However, to enhance convenience and minimise disruption, where we can, we will conduct the audit online.

How long will my certificate take to arrive?

This should be between 4-6 weeks.

How long does my certificate last?

After you have been accredited, you will need a surveillance audit every twelve months, however the certificate does not have to be renewed until three years after the initial audit.

How am I allowed to advertise my accreditation?

Logos can be used for the following:

* Business letter headed paper and compliment slips.
* Business adverts.
* Websites.
* Formal business emails (but not on bulk emails or unsolicited emails)
* Advertising materials and promotional merchandise.