

4 ● Learning Contracts

**AIM OF A CONTRACT
is to
ACHIEVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES
for both
THE TRAINEE & THE ORGANISATION**

What is a contract?

An agreement between the Trainee and the Mentor about how the WBT process and its assessment will happen.

- It is negotiated between the Mentor and Trainee
- The Trainee has an equal say in how things will happen.
- It takes account of Trainee's needs and circumstances.
- It is flexible and can be amended.

When?

- At the beginning of the WBT process, the contract should be the starting point.
- It can help in the building of the relationship between Trainee and Mentor.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR LEARNING CONTRACTS INCLUDES:

An understanding of the process of WBT e.g. Portfolio building

- The value of WBT to the Trainee.
- WBT assessment and how it will be carried out
- An understanding of the standards (*Essential Skills and Knowledge for ECCE*)
- An understanding of the Mentor/Assessors role, the role of the Trainee within the WBT process.

Without this knowledge, a Trainee will not be making an informed decision on whether WBT will be a suitable training method for them to participate in.

★ It is the role of the Mentor to fully brief Trainees and discuss and clarify the above points with them before they enter the WBT process.

How?

★ The starting point for any learning contract is a clear, detailed set of objectives. The Trainee will need to understand what time constraints are in place and

what level of work is required in order to complete their portfolio.

★ The statement of these objectives, expectations and assumptions can help show if the level of work to be completed is appropriate and realistic for the individual Trainee. The objectives should also make it clear why the work is being structured/assessed in the ways it is.

For example, the Mentor and Trainee may negotiate a regular schedule of contact within the work place, time for the Trainee to do course work, dates for review etc.

★ The assessment process should be explained and a time scale for interim assessment agreed e.g. on completion of one model.

★ When the set of objectives is worked out, the next step is to summarise the processes which will be used to achieve each objective. (*For example, the Trainee and Mentor may negotiate a time scale for the completion of each module - this may be reviewed at weekly mentoring sessions and updated as necessary.*)

Contracts should be recorded.

★ Although contracts can be verbal, it is better practice if they are written down, signed by both the assessor and Trainee and a copy made available to both. It is good practice if a third copy is held on file.

Written contracts

- are more durable
- are a focus to return to at review time or when there are disputes
- are evidence
- help the **Verifier** check consistency and practices