



Hi

Welcome to the February issue of JTL Learning News. We hope you are keeping safe and well during this extended period of lock down. Despite the very wintry weather most of us are experiencing, it's good to see that the days are getting longer and Spring is on its way!

So, to get things started ... do you know what Marcus Rashford, Heidi Klum, George Clooney and Barack Obama all have in common? The answer is ... they all share the Chinese zodiac birth sign for this year which is the 'Year of the Ox'! More about that later.

In this issue you will find a reminder of the support services that are available to you as a JTL learner, information on how to access our learning systems, details on how you can access learning resources to help you with your studies, an update on Functional Skills, as well as important guidance on how to use the internet safely.

We hope you find this information useful, but please do let us know if there's anything in particular you need help with. Please contact your Training Officer in the first instance, otherwise you can get in touch with us at [info@jtltraining.com](mailto:info@jtltraining.com)

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## Latest Updates

### How you can access support

As we find ourselves in another period of lockdown we again have disruption to our normal routines and uncertainty about the ongoing pandemic. It is natural to feel anxious or upset at times and you may be experiencing personal or work-related challenges, for example financial, legal, emotional or health related. If you would like support, we have a page on our website where you will find information from a range of organisations who will be able to help



[Find out more >>](#)



### Accessing JTL learning systems

While we are in lockdown, many of you will be accessing your learning remotely. JTL has systems set up to support you in your learning. If you don't already have these saved as 'favourites' or 'bookmarks', you

can visit the [JTL website](#) which has a range of information and sources of support including links to log in to Smart Assessor, bksb and other systems.

If you have a games console such as an Xbox or PlayStation please read our advice on how you can use it to access remote learning which is available on the Learning Resources and Logins page of the JTL website.

[Read advice >>](#)

## Smart Assessor Learning Materials

It is really important to stay in touch with your tutor and do your best to complete any work they set for you. Whether you learn at a JTL centre or one of our partner colleges, we also have learning materials for your qualification for you to access in Smart Assessor. Find them by clicking on the orange 'resources' widget and looking for Qualification resources. If there is a specific topic you would like to revise, ask your training officer to guide you to the appropriate unit



## Functional Skills

The government have not yet made a decision on whether learners will receive 'teacher assessed' grades for functional skills (as per the previous lockdown) or not. As soon as we have more information, we will let you know.

Until these decisions are made, great news is that there are ways to sit your Functional Skills tests. If you have the IT equipment to do so (laptop/computer and tablet/phone), you can do the test 'remotely' at a suitable place (at home or in a work office). If not, you may be asked to attend a JTL centre to complete your test. If you cannot sit your test remotely or attend a JTL centre, then we need to wait until we have a decision from Ofqual on what the option is in this situation.

It is important that you continue to work through your bksb learning and complete the progress checks to show that you are developing your maths/English skills and work through practice tests. Remember we have a dedicated Functional Skills team who are here to support you in preparation for your Functional Skills achievement. When you are contacted by your Functional Skills Trainer, you must respond and ensure you are available to attend learning with them. They will be making contact with you (phone, text, email) over the coming weeks to give you details of a plan for your Functional Skills. They will also give you a date (month) when you are targeted to sit your Functional Skills test. You can speak to your Functional Skills Trainer or Training Officer on the testing options available to you.

**[Access the bksb system >>](#)**

**[Read bksb learner guide >>](#)**

## Internet Safety

This year Internet Safety Day is looking at how reliable the internet is. We know the online world is a great source of information. The opportunities to research, learn new facts or skills, and even broaden viewpoints are extremely important to all internet users. The internet can also play an important role in allowing us to build positive relationships - to play, interact and share our lives with others. As we navigate these social spaces, we are constantly making decisions about who and what to trust online in the context of playing games together and socialising online

Safer Internet Day gives us the chance to build the skills we need to be able to make the best decisions as we navigate an online world where everything is not always as it seems

[Find out more and get started >>](#)



## Quality Checks

JTL is always looking for ways to improve our support for apprentices. As part of this process we may contact you by telephone or email to complete a survey or ask you about your learning so far. If you have recently changed your contact details, please let us know so that we can contact you if we need to. You can let your training officer know or get in touch using the email or phone number below.

## Chinese New Year

If you take a look at JTL's Inclusion and Safeguarding Calendar, you will see that February this year makes reference to Chinese New Year

Also known as the Spring Festival, the new moon on 12 Feb 2021 marks the start of the new year in the Lunar Calendar that is typically celebrated in China and other Asian countries. Whilst each country has its own traditions and celebrations that are steeped in local legends, that are very important to the way that people mark Seollal (South Korea), Tet (Vietnam) and Losar (Tibet), the most commonly spoken about ones in the UK tend to relate to Chinese New Year.

Whilst the way that the start of the Year of the Ox will be celebrated around the world may well look different this year, Chinese Astrologers say that people born in the year of the Ox are characterised as being diligent, hard-working and dependable, with an ability to keep calm that can make them great leaders

You will be familiar with people talking about Chinese New Year being characterised by one of the 12 animals that appear in the Chinese Zodiac with the animal changing each year – but do you know how that came about?

According to an ancient Chinese folk story, the Jade Emperor called 13 animals to a meeting where they announced that the years of the calendar would be named according to the order that they arrived in. This led to a 'Great Race' where the Rat came in first, and, after stopping for a nap (!) the Pig came in last. Sadly, the Cat never made it...

[View the Inclusion and Safeguarding calendar >>](#)





## Learning during a National Lockdown

Find out about all the measures, processes and procedures JTL has put in place to keep your learning on track during the latest national lockdown.

[Learn more >>](#)

## Don't miss out on exciting stuff

To 'opt-in' to receiving marketing communications from JTL, including news about learner offers or discounts from partner organisations such as the JIB, events and competitions and free taster courses that may help with your career progression, please update your email preferences using the link in the footer of this email



## And finally ...

So, that's all from us for now. Our next newsletter will be sent to you in March,

If you have any general questions or concerns about your learning please contact your Training Officer or call JTL's customer services team on **0800 085 2308**. You can also email [info@jtltraining.com](mailto:info@jtltraining.com)

**With best wishes,  
From the JTL Team**



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