



Care Training Code:
a guide for learners

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A. What this guide is for

This Care Training Code guide has been designed to help any care worker taking or planning to take any work-related training.

The Code provides:

- an overview of the most important ideas that social care training and development is based on
- things for you to bear in mind to get the best out of your training or development.

B. What is social care?

“Social care” consists of a group of services that provide personal care and support to people, helping them maintain or achieve independence, play a fuller part in society, protecting them in difficult situations and helping manage complex relationships. Many of the people who are supported by these services are among society’s potentially most vulnerable.

There are many organisations and individuals who purchase, use and provide learning support. They all have an important role to play in developing a high quality social care workforce by making sure that learning and development is focused on the real needs of the people who use services, and carers, whose voices should be heard in planning and delivering education and training. There is also a need to provide value for money in an environment of tight resources, and to produce positive and real results.

C. What are the core values of social care training and development?

Training and development needs to reflect the core values of social care as set out in the Common Induction Standards¹ and GSCC Codes of Practice².

Training and development providers in the social care sector particularly value:

- placing the needs of people who use services at the heart of their designs for learning
- supporting the development of social care services
- the potential of learning to benefit people emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically, and learning’s contribution to community growth and sustainability

¹ note to see glossary

² note to see glossary

- all learners: their progress and development, their learning goals and aspirations and the experience they bring to their learning and to others
- equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce, and communities
- reflection on, and evaluation of, their own practice and their continuing professional development as learning providers
- collaboration with other individuals, groups and/or organisations with a legitimate interest in the progress and development of learners.

D. Introduction

As a learner you will be keen to make sure that the training is a good use of your time, is of good quality and is useful to you in your job. Although your training may be funded by your employer, or through a training scheme, it is important that you are satisfied that it provides good value for money, that the time you have invested in it is worth it, and that it helps you in your career development.

E. Questions to consider

It might help you to think through the following questions, perhaps with your manager or employer or mentor:

1. **Why do it?** When considering why to give time to training/development you should consider the reasons and opportunities, for example:
 - have I been involved in a process of identifying training and development opportunities?
 - does my employer require me to do it? What do they expect of me?
 - have I got a training and development (or learning) plan, probably produced in collaboration with my manager or employer?
 - how will it help me improve the lives of people using the services my employer provides?
 - how will it enhance my skills and competence to do my job?
 - will it give me transferable skills that might help me with my career?
 - will it give me a valuable qualification? If not, is there a good reason for this?
 - will it help me to take on more responsibility?
 - will I have time?
 - will it be enjoyable?
 - will it help me feel good about my work?

- 2. What quality should I expect?** Remember that in the same way you provide services to other people, training providers are there to provide a service to you and your employer. You need to feel confident that they have taken the trouble to find out about you (or workers like you) and your needs, and have designed a quality programme to meet those needs. You should feel you are at the centre of the training or development activity. Consider the following about the programme:
- does it have clear objectives – what you will learn and gain from it?
 - is there a detailed programme or plan which sets out what will happen, when and how?
 - does the programme suggest the provider has a good knowledge of social care?
 - does the programme tell you what will be expected of you?
 - does the programme tell you how your success will be measured? Will you and/or your employer be involved in this?
 - does the programme tell you how its success will be measured?
 - does the programme tell you whether the training provider is working to an agreed quality standard?
 - does the programme seem to be staffed adequately?
 - if it's an NVQ³ programme will you get enough assessment time?
 - have you been told what the process of raising a concern or making a complaint is?
- 3. How convenient is it?** Social care workers often work in challenging and stressful environments with variable work patterns. You will need to feel confident that your training provider understands this and plans for it in their programme. Equally, you and your employer will need to understand what restricts the training provider in providing a range of quality activities to tight budgets. You will want to feel that the training provider is being as flexible as they possibly can and not that your programme design is dictated by money rather than social care needs.

You might ask:

- is the programme structured to support my working patterns?
- is any of the training going to happen in my workplace? How has this been planned for and integrated?
- will the programme design allow for me to complete it satisfactorily?
- how is the programme assessed?
- how flexible is the training or development provider?
- what happens if I miss part of the programme?

³ note to see glossary

- 4. Is the programme formally recognised?** There are many changes taking place in social care, not least that its workers will need more opportunities to learn and develop and to gain recognised qualifications. It is important that you as a social care worker are able to show not only what training and development you have participated in, but whether it was part of a recognised programme or qualification. Even a short course on, say, moving and handling, should provide you with proof of attendance which may be used later for career progression or continuing professional development (CPD) purposes (e.g. recognition of what skills and knowledge you have gained).

You might ask:

- will I be given a formal certificate after successful completion?
- will this show what skills and knowledge I gained from it or is it just proof of attendance?
- will the programme lead to a formal qualification and what will it be?
- is the programme recognised by an external awarding body⁴ or is it something the training provider alone accredits?
- how do I know that the training provider is following the requirements of an external awarding body who grants the award?
- have I been told how to raise any concerns about the programme to the external awarding body?

5. What support can I expect?

- what support will my employer or manager provide?
- will they allow adequate time away from my normal duties?
- will I have someone at work, or from another care organisation, who can help me – a mentor or ‘buddy’?
- how will the training provider support me? Will I have a tutor or mentor or ‘buddy’?
- how will they provide any extra support that I may need? Are there good opportunities to discuss my needs?
- will I be able to discuss the programme with my employer or manager during supervisions? Will this feed back into my development or learning plan? Will they help me reflect on what I have learnt and how this fits into the workplace?
- will my experiences on the programme, and thoughts about it, be used by my employer or manager in making decisions about purchasing training and development in the future?

6. Is it ‘transportable’?

- will the programme or qualification or certificate be recognised by other potential employers?
- might it help me progress in my career? How?

⁴ note to see glossary

F. Where can I find more information?

The glossary at the end of this guide provides further information about many of the terms and organisations mentioned in this guide. It also provides links to further information.

You may also find it useful to contact Skills for Care who carry a vast range of information and resources about all aspects of training and development. Skills for Care has a national office (in Leeds) and offices in each region.

National telephone: 0113 2451716

e-mail: info@skillsforcare.org.uk

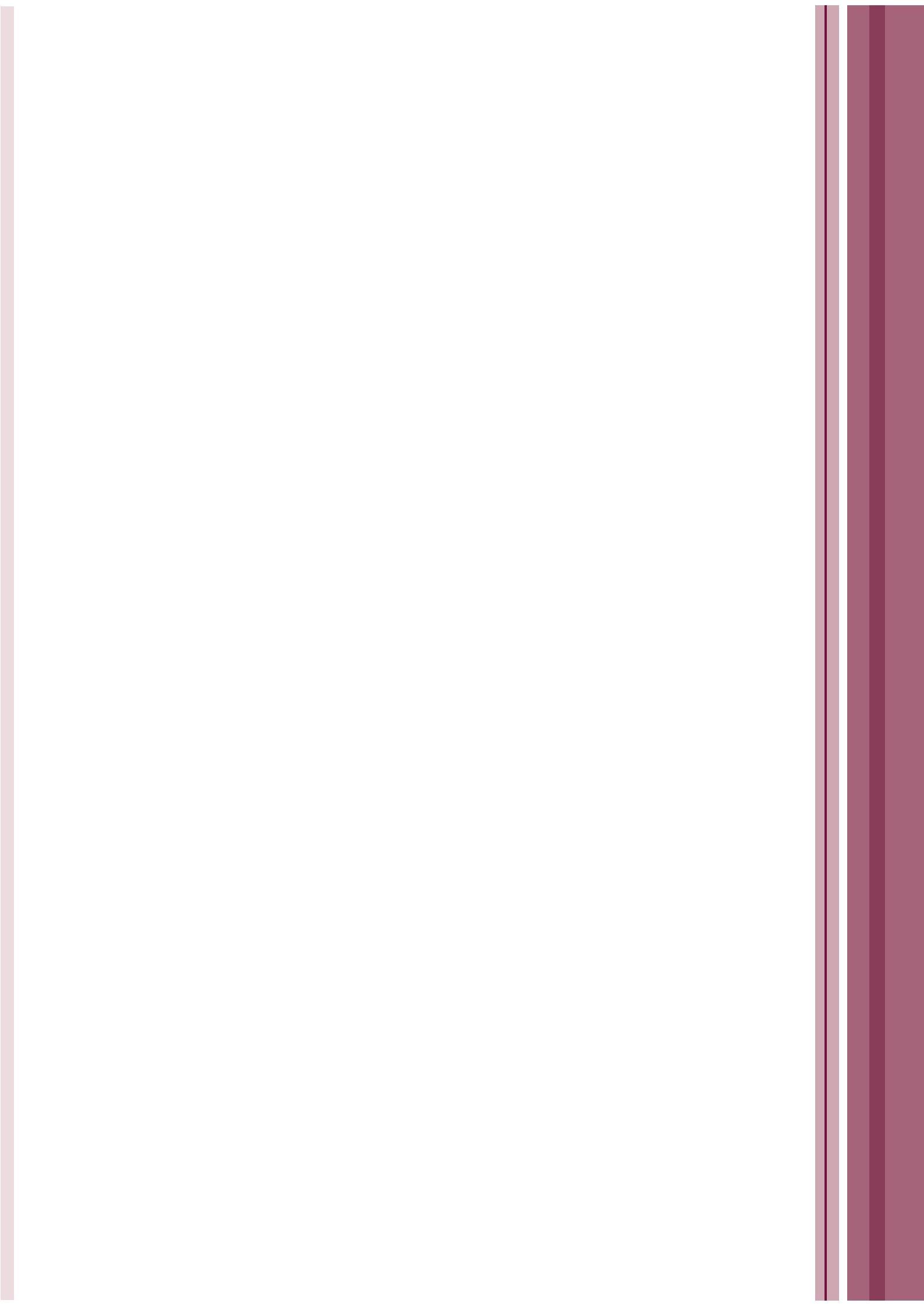
website: www.skillsforcare.org.uk

All of these will be able to direct you to your regional office.

Glossary

Awarding body	<p>An organisation that awards qualifications to learners and is responsible for: developing qualifications; assessing and quality assuring qualifications; awarding qualifications; providing customer service to assessment centres and learners.</p> <p>www.qca.org.uk</p>
Association of Care Training and Assessment Networks (ACTAN)	<p>ACTAN is a national organisation representing health & social care sector training, education and development providers. It aims to promote and develop best practice across health, care and education and represents the members on a local, regional and national level. A wide range of publications is available.</p> <p>www.actan.org.uk</p>
Common Induction Standards for Adult Social Care	<p>The standards are designed for people entering social care work and those changing roles or employers within adult social care. They set out the areas of knowledge that care workers need to know before they can work unsupervised. They comprise: understanding principles of care; understanding the organisation and role of the worker; maintaining safety at work; communicating effectively; recognising and responding to abuse and neglect; developing as a worker and are designed to be met within a 12-week period. The standards are not set at any particular qualification level, but they readily link to the NVQ level 2 - the minimum qualification used within the sector.</p> <p>www.skillsforcare.org.uk</p>
General Social Care Council (GSCC)	<p>GSCC is the social care workforce regulator and 'guardian of standards' for the social care workforce in England. It is responsible for the codes of practice, Social Care Register and social work education and training, thereby increasing the protection of people who use services, their carers and the general public.</p> <p>www.gsc.org.uk</p>
GSCC Code of Practice for Employers of Social Care Workers	<p>Describe the standards of conduct and practice within which employers of social care workers should work and sets down the responsibilities of employers in the regulation of workers.</p> <p>www.gsc.org.uk</p>
GSCC Code of Practice for Social Care Workers	<p>Describe the standards of conduct and practice within which social care workers should work.</p> <p>www.gsc.org.uk</p>

Knowledge Sets	<p>Knowledge sets provide descriptions of specific knowledge and understanding to help social care workers undertake their role and are designed to improve consistency in the learning of the adult social care workforce. They are key learning outcomes for specific areas of work and extend the NOS. Knowledge sets are designed to be used separately or alongside the Common Induction Standards and as part of a worker's continuing professional development. The following knowledge sets are available, with more topics planned: Infection prevention and control, Dementia, Nutrition & well-being, Safeguarding of vulnerable adults, Workers not involved in direct care, and Medication.</p> <p>www.skillsforcare.org.uk</p>
National Occupational Standards (NOS)	<p>NOS describe the skills, knowledge and understanding required by workers for specific functions. They are based on an analysis of functions performed in the workplace and form the basis of NVQs, for which they are commonly known as the 'competencies'. NOS are available for care staff, social workers, managers and some social work post qualifying awards. NOS can be used for defining work roles, for staff recruitment, supervision and appraisal purposes. They have also been broken down into knowledge and skills sets (see above).</p> <p>www.skillsforcare.org.uk</p>
National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)	<p>NVQs are work-related, competence-based qualifications. They reflect the skills and knowledge needed to do a particular job effectively, and show that an individual is competent in the area of work the NVQ represents. They are based on National Occupational Standards (NOS). Adult social care has NVQs at levels 2-4. Skills for Care has a short guide to NVQs at: www.skillsforcare.org.uk</p> <p>www.qca.org.uk/14-19/qualifications/index_nvqs.htm</p>
Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)	<p>SCIE's aim is to improve the experience of people who use social care by developing and promoting knowledge about good practice in the sector. Using knowledge gathered from diverse sources and a broad range of people and organisations, SCIE develops resources which are shared freely, supporting those working in social care and empowering people who use services.</p> <p>www.scie.org.uk/</p>





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