



Care Training Code:
a guide for purchasers of
training and development

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A. What this guide is for

This Care Training Code guide has been designed to help organisations purchasing training and development for the adult social care workforce.

The Code provides:

- an overview of the core values which should form the basis of social care training and development
- questions and issues that should be thought about when purchasing training and 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 people who use services, and carers whose voices should be heard in planning and delivering education and training provision. 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
- 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 purchaser of training/development, you will need to ensure that your staff are competent to undertake social care roles to high standards of professionalism, respect and sensitivity. All good employers take this responsibility seriously and are able to evidence competence to others. This will include the regulators, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)³, and any successor body.

Many employers will need to purchase services from a training and development provider or, more usually, a number of providers. Choosing a high-quality provider, and evaluating their delivery, should be one of your key business decisions. Their competence and ability to train and motivate your staff should be a major support to your business - you need to choose the most appropriate ones for you and your learners.

Training and development should be carried out as a 'partnership' between the purchaser, the provider and the learner. Its development and delivery should take account of the needs and wishes of people who use services and the learners themselves.

If you are an individual who employs your own personal assistants, you will probably find the Care Training Code Guide: a guide for individuals buying in training for their own staff useful.

¹ note to see glossary

² note to see glossary

³ note to see glossary

E. What do I need to consider?

Before making contact with any potential training and development providers you should consider a number of key questions:

1. **What** is it that you need to achieve?
 - what do you want the training and development to achieve for you as an employer and for the learner?
 - how have you identified these aims (for example do you undertake personal development planning with your staff)?
 - is this part of a long term workforce plan for all or some of your staff?
 - were the people who use your services asked for a view?
2. **Who** is it for?
 - were your staff asked for their view?
 - can appropriate trade unions contribute ideas?
 - is this a one-off or something that might form part of a bigger package of activity?
 - at what level⁴ is the training needed (eg Level 2, 3 or 4)?
 - is it for a single member of staff, a group of staff or all staff?
 - are there any specific needs to be considered for individuals to be involved (for example accessibility; reading, writing and numeracy; English as an additional language?)
3. **When** do I need it to be completed?
 - is it tied into statutory or regulatory requirements?
 - can it be phased over time?
 - how will it fit with staff rosters, holidays etc?
4. **Where** will it need to take place?
 - is it something that can be done on your premises or will it be more beneficial or practical for it to take place elsewhere?
 - will it involve an element of workplace learning that would need to be managed? If so, is there the capacity and resources to meet the full requirements of the training/development?

⁴ note to see glossary

5. **How** do I want the training to be delivered?

- day, evening, or weekends; or a mixture?
- delivered by a trainer, e-learning, paper-based materials or a 'blended' mixture?

6. Is **accreditation** important?

- there are basically two forms of training and development: 'accredited' which leads to learners who successfully complete receiving a qualification (for example an NVQ in Health and Social Care)⁵ and 'non-accredited' which does not lead to a recognised qualification but may provide a certificate to learners successfully completing (for example food hygiene). Both should result in more competent workers. There may also be new 'part' qualifications developed to help workers for whom a full qualification is not needed or not possible.

F. What training requirements need to be met?

It is important that the requirements of the following organisations are taken into account when planning, purchasing and delivering training and development:

- CSCI⁶ and any successor body (regulation processes, including National Minimum Standards⁷)
- GSCC⁸ (Codes of Practice)
- Skills for Care (including Common Induction Standards⁹).

It is also important to consider:

- any joint commissioning arrangements between social care and primary care trusts or other organisations
- knowledge sets.¹⁰ These are sets of key learning outcomes for specific areas of work within adult social care. They augment the Common Induction Standards for Adult Social Care and the NVQs in Health and Social Care to ensure that workers have sufficient knowledge and understanding to develop their skills in particular areas. They have been produced to improve consistency in the knowledge of the adult social care workforce
- the emerging 'New standard for employer responsiveness and vocational excellence'¹¹
- whether training and development is based on National Occupational Standards (NOS).¹²

⁵ note to see glossary

⁶ note to see glossary

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⁸ note to see glossary

⁹ note to see glossary

¹⁰ note to see glossary

¹¹ note to see glossary

¹² note to see glossary

G. What steps should I take?

1. Research the market

- high quality training is essential. Look for training providers from the private, public and voluntary/community sectors; see what they say they can offer. Also get a feel for the different 'styles' of training and development available, for example full NVQs; provision at higher education level, including individual modules or foundation degrees¹³; short courses; apprenticeships¹⁴
- talk with other social care providers, colleagues, staff and employer networks you are part of. Employer-led alliances or partnerships that have Training Strategy Implementation (TSI) fund¹⁵ contracts should be particularly useful. You should be able to find these from your regional Skills for Care office
- regional Skills for Care offices will often have a list of training providers they can direct you to (but they will be unable to make recommendations). They will also have information about sources of funding. Visit the Skills for Care national and regional websites
- find out if there is a 'training provider network' in your area
- look at Learning and Skills Council (LSC)¹⁶ approved lists of training providers
- look up local training providers on the internet or in Yellow Pages. Most will have their own website which will explain who they are and what they do
- collect brochures from training providers. Many will exhibit at conferences and local events, so you can talk to them there
- look out for adverts in trade magazines
- sign up to free training bulletins and newsletters
- build up a training resource reference file.

2. Get 'references'

- talk to other employers, colleagues or staff who might have used training providers
- ask training providers for a list of organisations that they have provided training for recently. Contact some of those and ask them how they felt about the provider. Ask what went well and what went less well. Have they won any awards or accolades linked to training of their workforce? Did they feel they got value for money? Would they use the provider again? Did the training provider seem to understand the nature of the social care business and did they work to the core values outlined above?
- look at inspection reports from Ofsted¹⁷ for further education and private sector providers, and QAA¹⁸ for higher education. (Note that from April 2007 ALI (Adult Learning Inspectorate)¹⁹ has been incorporated into Ofsted).

¹³ note to see glossary

¹⁴ note to see glossary

¹⁵ note to see glossary

¹⁶ note to see glossary

¹⁷ note to see glossary

¹⁸ note to see glossary

¹⁹ note to see glossary

3. Contact your short-list of training/development providers

Some questions you may like to ask of potential training/development providers are listed below. Before you ask these, you should have a good idea about what you want the training/development to achieve by working through sections E and F above.

- **how well do they know the social care sector?** Do they have experience of delivering training and development programmes in social care or related sectors? Do they understand the personal nature of care work and can they describe how their learning designs and delivery will reflect this experience? Do they take into account the needs and opinions of people who use services, and carers, in the design of their programmes? Is their knowledge of the sector and subject area up-to-date?
- **what is their approach to the core values?** Get them to describe their approach and ask them to illustrate from practical experience examples of how they think they have applied it in their work. Do they cite the GSCC Codes of Practice?
- **is the training/development based on National Occupational Standards (NOS)?** If so, which ones? If not, why not? Is it based on knowledge sets? If so, which ones? If not, why not?
- **how will they design and deliver the training/development you want?** What considerations will they take into account to ensure success for you and your learner(s)? How will the programme be delivered: is it college / centre based, or is it workplace based? Do they use distance learning, either computer-based or workbook-based? Will they 'blend' a number of approaches? How well will their design fit in with your service delivery requirements? How flexible are they, particularly in terms of allowing learners to continue to work as normal during the training/development? Are they used to working with adult learners?
- **does the training result in a qualification?** Some 'accredited training'²⁰ will provide a qualification for those completing it successfully. Who is the awarding body²¹?
- **does the training result in a certificate?** Some training/development which does not carry a full qualification may provide a certificate for those completing it. Do certificates come from nationally recognised organisations who carry authority? Are certificates merely 'certificates of attendance'?
- **how will progress be monitored?** How does the provider monitor learning progress and outcomes? Is there a contract/agreement with you and/or with the learner? Do they encourage you to become involved in regular monitoring and/or assessment of the learners' progress? Do you know the extent of your role in monitoring and assessment and are you able to fulfil this? How would they identify and deal with any problems which might arise? Who is responsible for this, and how will they report back to you?
- **what timescale will it be delivered to?** How long will it take to deliver the programme and over what time period? How long do learners usually take to complete, particularly if this is for a full care qualification? Does the time period sound sensible? Whilst it would be good to have short completion times this is not always best in terms of the learner getting the most out of the programme.

²⁰ note to see glossary

²¹ note to see glossary

- **what are the support arrangements?** Who will undertake the tutoring/ mentoring/support for your learners? What experience and qualifications do they have with the programme, with social care and with delivering training/ development? Do they have the capacity to deliver your programme? What arrangements are there for cover in the event of absence?
- **how will assessment be undertaken, if this is required?** Who will carry out the assessment? What experience and qualifications do they have with the programme and with social care? Will assessment be undertaken in the workplace? Will they make good use of observation? Will they use 'expert witnesses'²²?
- **what quality systems do they and their assessors work to?** How do they ensure and evaluate quality? How do they set quality benchmarks for themselves and their staff? Do they use any form of external accreditation or kite-marking? How transparent are their quality assurance procedures?
- **is there sufficient assessor/verification capacity to deliver the programme?** Is there sufficient assessor/verifier ²³ capacity (where required) to ensure that your learners can complete the programme successfully in the agreed time? What arrangements will there be to cover them in the event of absence?
- **if assessment includes portfolios, how will they be used?** Can portfolios be submitted electronically or are they paper-based? Do learners have access to computers if necessary? Does the provider use systems that support the learner and which do not overcomplicate the process? Are they working with 'paperless portfolios'? Do they use an appropriate range of evidence collection?
- **what will it cost?** How much will it cost and how is payment organised (eg in stages or upfront)? What happens if the provider fails to complete on time or defaults in any way? Will they negotiate a deposit arrangement? Is the provider already in receipt of funding for this activity and how is this reflected in their charges? What funds are available from other sources to help with the costs?
- **will the provider undertake a joint risk assessment** in order to identify and minimise any risk attached to any work-based learning activity?
- **will the learning provider take responsibility for CRB checks** (Criminal Records Bureau) on staff who might be coming into your premises? Can they provide appropriate evidence of their identity through ID cards or other documentation? These aspects are particularly important for domiciliary care.

4. Get written details

If you are satisfied with the answers to these questions you should by now be able to give your training provider a detailed description of your requirements. It is important that you state clearly what you need rather than simply accepting what the provider may offer in the first place. Ask for a written statement of what they will provide that covers the points raised in the questions above.

You will also want to be clear about both total cost and cost per learner, and whether other funding sources have been used and how these are reflected in the costs.

²² note to see glossary

²³ note to see glossary

5. Negotiate

How flexible are they prepared to be on both programme design and delivery, and cost, to ensure that what they are offering meets your real needs and are not driven by their organisational preferences? Does the training/development have to take place in college or a centre when delivery in the workplace would be more effective? Ensure that you are happy with all aspects of the programme and that monitoring will be in place to spot any problems. Successful learning providers should generally have the confidence and flexibility to meet your specific needs. Remember that cheap training does not always equal good training, but it can.

6. Agree and sign agreement/contract

Once you are satisfied, make sure you have a written agreement setting out what is being provided and who is responsible for what aspect of the contract delivery. This is important for all training/development.

7. Monitor, evaluate and review outcomes

Make certain that you take an active interest in the programme and that the agreed monitoring arrangements are taking place.

Effective training is never a matter of just 'ticking all the boxes and then you're done'. It is a continuous process of improvement. Remember to recognise and praise achievement – of both learners and trainers.

H. 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

<p>Accreditation</p>	<p>Recognition by a professional body (eg Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, GSCC, awarding body, a university) that a specific award, or a specific programme of training/development, is of a particular standard. Can also mean that an individual has fulfilled the requirement for 'registration' (eg by GSCC).</p>
<p>Accredited learning</p>	<p>Training/development on a programme/course that has been accredited (see above).</p>
<p>Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI)</p>	<p>See Ofsted below.</p>
<p>Apprenticeships: Health and Social Care, Level 2 and Advanced</p>	<p>The Health and Social Care Apprenticeship Programme is available at Level 2 and Advanced. It is a framework of qualifications and other components that have been identified by employers from the Sector as providing a valuable route into training and subsequent accreditation for trainees/students and staff.</p> <p>On completion of the framework the Apprentice will be eligible to be awarded an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate at Level 2 or Advanced.</p> <p>Historically, Apprenticeships have attracted mainly those in the 16-24 age group - as LSC funding focused on this age band. From September 2007 those over 25 became eligible for LSC funding to undertake Adult Apprenticeships, although this funding is restricted to local priorities.</p> <p>The participation and completion of an Apprenticeship Framework is not restricted to those in receipt of funding.</p> <p>www.skillsforcare.org.uk www.apprenticeships.org.uk</p>
<p>Assessor/verifier</p>	<p>Assessors assess whether a learner has reached the level of competence required to be given a particular award or qualification. They also generally induct learners onto a training or development programme, provide assessment support in the workplace and provide on-going support. Assessors work for an 'assessment centre' which can be in-house at an employer, at a college of FE or at a private sector training provider. Assessors have a qualification (eg A1, A2 or D32/33) and are occupationally competent at the appropriate level.</p> <p>Verifiers ensure the quality of assessment. They have a qualification (eg V1, V2 or D34) and be occupationally competent at the appropriate level.</p>
<p>Association of Care Training and Assessment Networks (ACTAN)</p>	<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>

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>
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>
Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)	<p>The CSCI regulates, inspects and reviews all registered social care services in the public, private and voluntary sectors in England in order to improve the quality of care and stamp out bad practice. It looks at the whole picture of social care including social services teams at councils, care homes and care agencies. CSCI is funded by the Department of Health and is answerable to parliament.</p> <p>www.csci.org.uk</p>
CoVE (Centres of Vocational Excellence)	<p>'New Standards' for employer responsiveness and vocational excellence CoVEs, launched in 2001, aim to improve the capacity of the further education sector to deliver specialist work-based learning. There are some 30 CoVES related to care. Recently, Quality Mark development, and re-accreditation of CoVEs, have been combined to create a 'New Standard for employer responsiveness and vocational excellence'. This is an assessment framework open to all organisations involved in the delivery of training and development to employers.</p> <p>http://cove.lsc.gov.uk/ www.newstandard.co.uk</p>
Expert Witness	<p>Expert witness is not a recognised role in all awards for all awarding bodies. In most cases, a witness will give a testimony and the assessor makes a judgement concerning the weight they can give to that testimony. 'See Awarding Body above'</p>
Foundation degree (FDs)	<p>Foundation Degrees are innovative degrees designed and delivered in partnership with employers to equip people with the relevant knowledge and skills for particular types of work. They are available in a wide range of subject areas including: 'Health and Social Care', 'Care Management' and 'Social Care'.</p> <p>www.foundationdegree.org.uk</p>

General Social Care Council (GSCC)	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. www.gsc.org.uk
GSCC Code of Practice for Employers of Social Care Workers	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. www.gsc.org.uk
GSCC Code of Practice for Social Care Workers	Describe the standards of conduct and practice within which social care workers should work. www.gsc.org.uk
Knowledge sets	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. www.skillsforcare.org.uk
Learning and Skills Council	(LSC)The LSC's goal is to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to ensure we have a workforce of world-class standard. It is responsible for planning and funding high quality education and training for everyone in England other than those in universities. The LSC is a non-departmental public body. www.lsc.gov.uk/
'Level' of training	See NQF below

National Minimum Standards (NMS)	<p>The national minimum standards set a minimum level of service for each element of providing a care service. They are important guidelines to help care services, inspectors and people who use services to judge the standard of service. They are designed to make sure everyone understands what's expected and so services can be measured against the same standards. NMS exist for care homes, adult placement schemes, domiciliary care and nursing agencies. NMS are developed and published by the Department of Health.</p> <p>www.csci.org.uk</p>
National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	<p>A framework describing all qualifications in England in terms of their level and 'pathway'. There are nine levels defined (Entry Level and Levels 1-8) and three pathways (academic (eg GCSE); general vocational (eg GNVQ); and occupational (NVQ and VRQ)). See also QCF below.</p> <p>www.qca.org.uk www.qca.org.uk/qca_6632.aspx for an NQF factsheet</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 have a short guide to NVQs at: www.skillsforcare.org.uk</p> <p>www.qca.org.uk/14-19/qualifications/index_nvqs.htm</p>
New Standard for employer responsiveness and vocational excellence	<p>See CoVE above.</p> <p>www.newstandard.co.uk</p>
Ofsted	<p>The Office for Standards in Education , Children's Services and Skills inspects and regulates care for children and young people, and inspects education and training for learners of all ages. Inspection reports for each FE and work-based training provider are available on the website. (NB Ofsted now incorporates the former Adult Learning Inspectorate – ALI).</p> <p>www.ofsted.gov.uk</p>

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)	<p>QAA provides quality assurance services for UK higher education. It safeguards the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and encourages continuous improvement in the management of the quality of higher education. Quality reports for each HE institute are available on the QAA website.</p> <p>www.qaa.ac.uk</p>
QAA Code of Practice	<p>The Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education provides guidance on maintaining quality and standards for universities and colleges subscribing to the QAA.</p> <p>www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/</p>
Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)	<p>The QCF is being piloted during 2007. It is a unit-based framework which is designed to recognise a wider range of learner achievement than NOS (see above). Each unit is assigned a level (1-8) and a credit value. The Level is based on NQF (see above) and the credit value is based on the number of 'notional learning hours' required to achieve an individual unit. Qualifications will be made up of groups of units. SSCs together with awarding bodies will play key roles in the development of units which are fit for purpose and in the development of qualifications.</p> <p>www.qca.org.uk/qca_8150.aspx</p>
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)	<p>The QCA maintains and develops the national curriculum and associated assessments, tests and examinations as well as accrediting qualifications in colleges and at work, including NVQs. It also regulates awarding bodies and exams to ensure they are fit for purpose. The QCA publishes the NVQ Code of Practice.</p> <p>www.qca.org.uk</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>
Training Strategy Implementation fund (TSI)	<p>Managed by Skills for Care, TSI supports employers with workforce development where access to other support funding is not available or too complex to achieve, such as for small organisations.</p> <p>www.skillsforcare.org.uk</p>



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