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# Choosing workforce learning

A guide to choosing the right learning and development in adult social care.  
For learning providers, commissioners and purchasers.

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“we help you to  
develop your  
workforce”





# Preface

“The recognition of the importance of learning was driven by my personal view that having skilled and flexible staff leads directly to better quality service provision, but it was also a hard-nosed business decision. We saw that when we trained staff from day one they were confident in their roles very early in their careers, tended to stay with us much longer and their absenteeism was lower. In short we produced a confident, flexible and reliable workforce.”

That was my own experience when I was the CEO of a major service provider in the North of England; of the absolute need for any organisation offering adult social care to have capable, confident and skilled workers.

It is imperative that our sector provides high quality, person centred services and therefore it is vital that the workforce is able to develop the skills and knowledge they need to do a demanding but rewarding job.

Learning and development needs to focus on the practical skills workers need to do the job but also instilling in them the values they need to put at the heart of their practice at all times. People who need care and support have the right to care that is not only competent, but always puts dignity at the heart.

An essential part of making sure you get the right learning package for your organisation and individual workers is finding the right learning provider. There are numerous providers offering a whole range of services and qualifications so finding the right one is not always an easy process.

In this guide you will find advice on:

- identifying the learning needs of your workers
- the questions you need to ask to develop a learning package for your organisation
- finding the right learning provider for your organisation.

Every organisation is different but we hope this guidance will support you to find the best learning provider to meet your needs and to help you deliver that capable, confident and skilled workforce that will meet the challenges ahead for the adult social care sector in England.



**Sharon Allen, CEO Skills for Care**



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“ staff should be able to take part  
in learning and development  
so they can carry out their role  
effectively ”

Outcome 14, CQC Essential Standards of Quality and Safety



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 About this publication

*Choosing workforce learning* has been designed to help those in adult social care select and purchase learning and development for their workforce.

“High quality leadership... is fundamental to the delivery of high quality care”

**Norman Lamb, Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF), published by the National Skills Academy 2012**

The Leadership Qualities Framework describes the attitudes and behaviours that provide the foundation for leadership. It outlines what leadership should look like in different contexts. In the section on continuing professional development, it clearly points out the responsibility to develop and maintain learning and development for all.

As well as highlighting the benefits to your business of investing in skills, this guide provides information on:

- different types of learning
- assessing learning needs
- choosing the right learning
- finding a learning provider
- evaluating learning and development
- questions and issues that should be considered.

There is also a list of useful resources at the end of this document and a checklist to help you choose a suitable learning provider.

If you are an individual who employs your own personal assistant, you may find Skills for Care's *Toolkit for employing personal assistants* useful for ideas on developing them. For more information and links to other resources visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers).

*Choosing workforce learning* replaces Skills for Care's former *Care Training Code* publications.

## 1.2 Core values of social care learning and development

Understanding of core values and attitudes in social care needs to underpin all learning and development and should be a key principle as you select your learning provider.

The value base of social care embraces rights, choice, equality, diversity, inclusion and individuality - all of which are promoted through the personalisation approach which should be the foundation of current social care practice and attitudes. It is vital that staff not only learn the right skills and knowledge but have these values as without them no amount of skills or knowledge will ensure a quality experience for the person who uses services.

Learning and development needs to reflect the core values of social care and learning providers should particularly value:

- supporting the development of excellence in social care services through quality learning experiences
- equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to fair access to learning and development for all
- the progress and development of all learners
- the experiences the learner brings to their own learning and to others
- putting people who use services and carers at the heart of their designs for learning and development
- evaluation and development of their own practice as providers of learning and development
- the embedding of the adult social care value base within all learning activities.





## 2. Why invest in learning and development?

As an employer and provider of care services, you need to ensure that your workforce is competent to undertake their roles to high standards of professionalism, respect and sensitivity.

As a good employer you will be able to evidence the competence of your workers to deliver quality care services to appropriate regulators and to the commissioners of your services, whether local authorities or private individuals. However there is a real need to ensure money and time are wisely spent on purchasing the right learning and development. All learning needs to deliver positive and meaningful outcomes for your workers, your business and the people who use your service.

There are a wide range of benefits from investment in qualifications. As a sector we need to raise ambitions for a skilled workforce demonstrated through qualification achievements. Business benefits include:

**Quality service** – Completion of accredited qualifications develops a professional culture within the organisation and results in highly skilled and competent workers that support the provision of high quality services for the people who you support.

**Marketability** – The achievement of accredited qualifications provides external validation for the quality of your workforce. They demonstrate current best practice to a benchmark in which you and the people who use your service can have confidence. Customer satisfaction is increased and the reputation of the organisation is enhanced both with new people you might support and when recruiting new workers.

**Retention** – Workers who receive structured learning and development feel valued, supported and engaged with their organisation. They develop confidence, self-esteem and greater job satisfaction and are more likely to remain in their post. This can reduce turnover meaning you are spending less on recruiting new workers.

**Safety** – You want to be sure that your workers contribute to the quality of care rather than making dangerous and expensive mistakes. Learning, development and qualifications in the key areas of health and safety provide reassurance about their confidence and competence.

In summary, developing your people and improving their skills can:

- increase quality of work and personalised delivery of care services
- improve customer satisfaction
- improve employee motivation
- reduce turnover and absenteeism
- help you adapt to change and achieve business sustainability.

## 3. Types of learning

It is important to consider which is the right kind of learning to meet the particular needs you have identified rather than the quickest and / or cheapest. This section identifies different types of learning available and suggests where some kinds of learning may be more appropriate than others. When choosing the right kind of learning you need to decide what your preferred outcomes are.

### 3.1 In-house

#### Informal learning and development

For most workers, learning comes informally on-the-job using the existing expertise. This includes:

- induction
- job shadowing
- coaching
- mentoring
- cascading learning (when one employee goes on a course and then passes the knowledge and/or skills on to other workers)
- knowledge banks or working in collaboration with other services to share expertise
- books and publications.

#### Formal learning and development

You might choose to design and run your own learning or work with external training providers. If you do make sure you have the appropriate expertise and resources, including:

- an experienced trainer
- relevant and useful learning materials (some publishers list their learning materials on [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk), see qualifications and training > training materials listing)
- appropriate resources to carry out the learning and development, e.g. space, equipment.

If your business doesn't have the necessary skills or expertise to design and provide in-house learning opportunities, you may want to consider purchasing off-the-shelf or tailor-made courses to be delivered in-house.

Units from all the sector qualifications are available at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf) and can be used as guides to decide learning outcomes for any internal learning activity. This way internal learning activity can be used to support future external learning and learners may not need to repeat learning in the future.

## 3.2 External provision

External learning activity can be very flexible. Types of learning include:

- traditional classroom learning
- day release
- work based
- e-learning
- distance learning
- workshops.

Many external programmes include a blended approach using a range of these.

Learners can study for full or part qualifications or undertake useful programmes which are not accredited.



### Is accreditation important?

There are two forms of external learning and development which can both result in more competent workers:

**Accredited** which leads to learners achieving a recognised formal qualification on successful completion. The learning will be assessed and accredited by a national awarding organisation according to national standards. It could be:

- 'knowledge' only such as Level 2 Award in Stroke Awareness or L3 award in end of life care,
- 'competence' qualification such as Level 2 or 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care or
- 'continuing professional development' (knowledge or competence) such as Level 3 Certificate in Dementia Care.

**Non-accredited** which does not lead to a formal qualification but which may provide a certificate to learners who have successfully completed some learning, e.g. understanding person-centred planning, first aid, fire safety. This could be useful as a refresher course or short course about something specific and focussed to top up learning. It could be useful in house learning organised and relevant to the particular organisation in which the learner operates. Some staff are reluctant to undertake accredited learning through fear of failure. It is important for the organisation to recognise this and to encourage development of knowledge and skills through this less formal route to give confidence.

### Recommended

In general it is more useful for learners to undertake 'accredited learning'. This is likely to be national so it is transferrable and will be consistent with national standards giving you the confidence of the quality of the learning provided. Accredited learning should be assessed to a national standard.

If you are looking for accredited qualifications, ranging from awards, certificates and diplomas you may need help in selecting the right qualification and units for your workers to undertake. From March 2013 you will be able to review and choose these using our Skill Selector. This is a simple online tool found on the Skills for Care website that will help you in quick and easy stages to build a qualification that best suits the needs of your business and the learner.

### 3.3 E-learning

E-learning is a general term that covers the use of any sort of information technology (IT) to provide or support learning. It includes:

- the world-wide-web
- DVDs or CDs
- digital TV
- email
- mobile phones (e.g. via text messages)
- social media.

E-learning can be done using any form of technology that connects to the internet. The most common way is by using a desktop or laptop computer. However, more learners are now also using mobile technologies such as smartphones and tablet computers.

The term e-learning can be used to refer to just a single snippet of learning about a specific topic, as well as larger units of learning grouped together to form online courses. The best use of e-learning is as part of a 'blended' learning package, e.g. using e-learning for the knowledge aspect of learning and then practical hands-on sessions, guided discussions and observation for turning knowledge into demonstrable skills.

Benefits of e-learning:	Potential pitfalls of using e-learning as a single approach:
flexibility	not practical or 'hands-on'
cost effectiveness	can be isolating
develops and tests knowledge and tracks results	not so good for learning that requires subtle judgement or communication skills
learning in private	hard to review – you need to go through the package yourself first
learning at a time and pace that suits learner	not good for demotivated learners
can be done almost anywhere	can be intimidating for those with low or no IT skills

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has a free guide to e-learning, *Get connected to e-learning for social care providers*, which can be downloaded from their website. They also have free learning resources – including videos on their Social Care TV service – on the 'Developing Skills and Services' pages of [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk).

## Guidance available

Skills for Care has developed a guide aimed at employers and managers in the care sector with responsibility for staff learning and development (L&D). This guide offers a (non-technical) overview of learning technologies, with guidance to help assess what might be useful to employers and managers. It highlights that like all technologies, learning technologies work better in some circumstances than others – they are certainly not the answer to every challenge in workforce development. Learning technologies work most effectively when integrated into an overall learning strategy tailored to your particular circumstances often called a ‘blended approach’.

Skills for Care has worked with employers and have developed some case studies that accompany the guide to show how a range of social care employers are using technologies alongside other approaches to workforce training and development. A short excerpt from one of these case studies is reproduced below.

### Case study - MacIntyre

One case study features MacIntyre, a learning disabilities charity that develops its own e-learning content and uses a customised commercial learning management system to help manage a blended approach to recruitment, training and development.

MacIntyre staff each receive over 30 hours of training annually, a mix of in-house and externally commissioned. With many of its services delivered in community settings, MacIntyre’s workforce is widely dispersed. This places a significant constraint on face-to-face training, which MacIntyre seeks to address through e-learning.

#### Learning delivery

MacIntyre takes a blended approach to training, mixing face-to-face delivery with e-learning to optimise the overall programme. For example, MacIntyre has developed its own e-learning content covering the Common Induction Standards, and uses this to make the waiting time productive:

*“People are really keen at the very beginning, so we make good use of this enthusiasm, and make our induction more efficient and effective, by enrolling new-starts on the online induction training in advance of their arrival. So we can have people arriving on their first day having already got up to speed with the underpinning knowledge on safeguarding”*

MacIntyre also supports staff at supervisory level to attain qualifications. Their own in-house trainers and assessors map all the e-learning content the organisation develops to QCF credits, so that any completed learning counts towards qualifications where possible:

*“We encourage people to be independent learners, so we provide the Ashridge Library of management materials online for example, and people will use that when they are studying for a manager’s award, for example, but they will also use it for everyday workplace questions.”*

## 4. What learning do you need?

### 4.1 Regulation

It is important that the requirements of any regulatory organisations are taken into account when planning, purchasing and delivering learning and development. This means taking note of requirements arising from:

- any regulation and registration of services (e.g. Care Quality Commission (CQC) guidance)
- any relevant codes of practice
- commissioning authorities (e.g. local authority contracting requirements or joint commissioning arrangements).

You can find guidance developed by Skills for Care in partnership with CQC to support employers to meet the Essential Standards of Quality and Safety at

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc).

#### **Meeting CQC Essential Standards of Quality and Safety**

Outcome 14 Supporting workers covers the requirement to induct staff appropriately and to ensure their learning and development needs are identified and subsequently met. It states that people who use services should be... 'safe and their health and welfare needs are met by competent staff'. This outcome further states:

This is because providers who comply with the regulations will:

- Ensure that staff are properly supported to provide care and treatment to people who use services.
- Ensure that staff are properly trained, supervised and appraised.
- Enable staff to acquire further skills and qualifications that are relevant to the work they undertake.

Outcome 14E refers to standards and qualifications developed by Skills for care as it states:: People who use services receive care treatment and support from staff who have undertaken:

- Skills for Care Common Induction Standards.
- Training and qualifications that satisfy the learning outcomes as advised by Skills for Care.
- Units or qualifications relevant to job role as advised by Skills for Care.

### 4.2 Core employability skills

There are several 'Skills for Life' or core employability skills that are essential for workers to effectively undertake their roles. These skills include the ability to:

- demonstrate self-management
- solve problems
- work with others in a team
- communicate effectively with colleagues and with customers
- understand the environment they are working in
- use numbers effectively
- use language effectively
- have a positive approach to work.



## English and Maths

There is provision available for English and Maths, funded by the government. Learning providers can tailor this to your specific business needs. There are a number of specialist learning and development tools for the adult social care sector, particularly:

- Skills for Care's *Learning Through Work* series of learning modules that develop communication and number skills in the adult social care workplace. They are designed to help supervisors deliver bite-size chunks of learning wherever natural learning opportunities arise as part of day to day care work. For more information visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/publications](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/publications).
- Care Skillsbase with free web-based tools that help social care employers manage Skills for Life in the workplace, For more information visit [www.scie.org.uk/workforce/careskillsbase/index.asp](http://www.scie.org.uk/workforce/careskillsbase/index.asp).

Employers and learning providers state that the best way to approach Skills for Life is through integrating it fully into the learner's vocational learning programme. If your workers prefer to improve their skills out of work, they too can access free learning in their own time. Find out more about skills for life and its importance in the workplace at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/skillsforlife](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/skillsforlife).





## 5. Choosing the right learning

### 5.1 Organisational learning needs analysis

A learning needs analysis is a way of figuring out what learning and development your business needs and where you have skills and knowledge gaps. Regular analysis helps you to keep on top of your organisational skills needs as your business changes and develops.

As a first step, try to gather information through:

- employee surveys
- management observations
- customer feedback
- company meetings and inspection reports
- local and national service delivery plans and key policies.

To carry out an analysis you need to:

- assess the current skills of individuals at all levels of your business
- identify the skills needed to take your business forward
- analyse the gap between your business's current skills resources and future skills needs
- plan for bridging that gap with appropriate learning and development.

Don't forget to also ask your workers and the people who use your services for their input - they are the most likely to experience day-to-day problems that arise from any skills gap.

There is a template for an organisational learning plan and other templates that might be useful when deciding what learning is needed for your business at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/mis](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/mis).

### 5.2 What is best for your workforce?

When putting together your organisational plan, you should consider the following:

- legal and regulatory requirements
- core and employability skills
- whether a recognised qualification is essential or beneficial
- whether the learning will be delivered in-house or externally
- the cost/what budget is available
- how your business will benefit
- the space required if the learning is done in-house
- how much time is needed
- when you want it to happen.

When considering the learning and development required in your organisation it is important to reflect on whether the worker will be able to deliver what they have learnt in their workplace. There is a danger of being 'competent in a non-competent environment' and it may be that organisational changes are required in order for the new learning to be adopted. If not there is a danger that despite learning, a culture of incompetence or poor practice will continue to be the norm.

## 6. Finding learning providers

Before making contact with any potential learning and development providers, whether for internal or external delivery, you should research the market and get references or recommendations.

### Researching the market

- √ Look for learning providers from the private, public and voluntary/community sectors and see what they can offer.
- √ Talk with other social care providers, colleagues, workers and employer networks to see if they have any recommendations.
- √ Speak to your Skills for Care area officer. Contact details can be found at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk) > In your area.
- √ Look at the Skills Funding Agency website to view their 'register of training providers' or if you're looking for an Apprenticeship provider visit the National Apprenticeship Service website [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk).
- √ Look on the National Skills Academy for Social Care website to see who is listed on their register of endorsed training providers [www.nsasocialcare.co.uk](http://www.nsasocialcare.co.uk).
- √ Look at Ofsted inspection reports ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)) and for higher education QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) reports [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk).

Skills for Care's learning provider directory will assist you to locate providers of accredited qualification programmes and can be located on our website - [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningproviders](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningproviders).

## 7. Choosing a learning provider

**Important** - Before getting to this stage you should have a clear idea, or specification, about what you want the learning and development to achieve or the qualification you would like to purchase. You will get this from undertaking your organisational learning needs analysis as described in section 5 of this guide.

The checklist in the appendix will give you a list of questions you may wish to use that will help you to decide which learning provider to choose.

It is particularly important to ensure that the balance of knowledge and competence assessment meets your requirements. Sometimes it is important that knowledge is assessed by demonstration of practice which uses this underpinning knowledge, and not just in the classroom.

### **Clarify the offer**

Once you have chosen a provider it is essential that you clarify what you need rather than simply accepting what the provider may be offering.

You will want to find out how flexible the provider will be on both programme design and delivery, and on cost to ensure that what they offer meets your real needs and is not driven by their preferences. Successful learning providers should have the confidence and flexibility to meet your specific needs.

Cheap provision does not always equal good provision, but economy and quality can be combined if you've done your homework and asked all the right questions from the start.



### **Explore funding opportunities**

It may be possible to gain some contribution to the cost of the learning and development you have chosen, either directly for the price of the course or for other incurred expenses, e.g. travel or backfill. Funding opportunities are constantly changing. For more information visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/funding](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/funding).



### **Agree and sign a contract**

Once you are satisfied, make sure you have a written agreement setting out what is being provided and who is responsible for which aspects of the contract delivery.



### **Monitor, evaluate and review outcomes**

Make certain that you take an active interest in the learning and development your organisation is paying for, as it is costing you financially and in time. Ensure that the monitoring arrangements you agreed with your provider are taking place.

## 8. Evaluation of learning

Having invested valuable resources, it's important to check that the learning and development your organisation is paying for is meeting your regulatory and business needs. How has the learning helped your workforce deliver the aims and objectives of your business plan? Can your investment be quantified? Can an impact on your business be demonstrated? Has performance improved as a result?

A good saying to remember is 'Plan, Do, Review, Analyse'. Reviewing or evaluating the learning and development you and your workers undertake allows you to work towards improving it in the future.



**Plan** – identify the skills and knowledge gaps within your organisation and plan appropriate learning and development. Agree with those attending the purpose of the learning and both individual and organisational outcome expectations.

**Do** – Attend the learning and/or development activity.

**Review** – Undertake an immediate evaluation

**Analyse** – Carry out a time-lapsed evaluation of the usefulness and effectiveness of the learning and development, and the improvements there have been to practice, skills, service delivery, customer feedback, etc.

There are several ways to get an accurate picture of the success of any learning and development.

### **Employee supervision and performance appraisal**

Review the impact on the employee's performance as part of your regular appraisal process. This is a good time to discuss how useful the employee found the learning, how they have been able to use it in their work and any additional needs they may have.

### **Business performance evaluations**

The effectiveness of learning and development can be evaluated by measuring tangible performance indicators, such as reductions in errors, improved record-keeping and lower absenteeism and turnover. Just as important are the qualitative improvements that learning and development can bring to your organisation and the services you deliver. Examples of measurable qualitative improvements could be improved customer feedback, better teamwork, fewer customer complaints and greater innovation within your organisation. Time-lapsed evaluation should take place after an employee has had time to put their learning into practice to assess the actual changes that have come about as a result.

### **Customer feedback**

It's always good practice to regularly ask for feedback from those who use your services and from others who indirectly benefit, such as carers or relatives. A simple survey on specific aspects of your service delivery can give you a very good insight into whether there has been an improvement as a result of your investment in learning and development.



## 9. Useful Skills for Care resources

There are numerous Skills for Care resources which you will find extremely helpful when planning and purchasing your learning. Some are listed here but check Skills for Care's website for new products and publications - [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk).

**Capable, Confident, Skilled** - *A workforce development strategy for people working, supporting and caring in adult social care*

This workforce development strategy is intended to support workforce commissioning, planning and development to meet the new vision and priorities in adult social care. It is the basis for future support for all types and sizes of existing and emerging employers, as well as for the workforce, volunteers, carers and people who use services. That support will equip those providing social care with the right skills to deliver safe and high quality services.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wds](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wds).

**Common core competences and principles for end of life care and developing end of life care practice**

These documents are frameworks for ensuring workers have the learning, development and support they need and deserve in end of life care. They use practice examples to highlight practical application of the competences and principles.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/endoflifecare](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/endoflifecare).

**Common core principles to support self care**

Skills for Care worked in partnership with Skills for Health to develop the Common core principles to support self care. The purpose of the principles is to enable organisations and all those who work in health and social care, whether as commissioners, service provider or educators to make personalised services a reality.

On the Skills for Care website you will find a self care learning manual which contains worksheets and presentations to help you to support your workforce to understand this concept further - [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/selfcare](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/selfcare).

**Common core principles to support dignity**

Dignity focuses on the significance and value of every person as a unique individual. We show our commitment to upholding other people's dignity by the ways in which we treat them; fairly, truthfully and with care and compassion. We respect other's views, choices and decisions and do not make assumptions about what they want, like or how they want to be treated.

This guide presents the seven common core principles to support dignity in adult social care. It provides details around each principle and the 'Stop! Think dignity principles to practice guides' provide real life examples and scenarios for each principle.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/dignity).



### **Common Induction Standards (CIS)**

The CIS are a mandatory part of any new workers induction designed for use with people entering employment in social care for the first time and those changing roles or employers within social care.

Designed to be met within a 12 week period, the revised 2012 CIS now map across to the mandatory units of the Health and Social Care Diploma to ensure there is consistency of approach for the workforce. Each standard contains a number of areas of knowledge that care workers need to know about before they can work unsupervised. Managers have a duty to ensure new workers know enough to meet the required outcomes in each knowledge area. If carried out in depth, they can provide excellent evidence of underpinning knowledge towards the diploma at level 2 or level 3.

Information on free downloadable documents and priced publications to support induction are available at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cis](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cis).

### **Finders Keepers**

This recruitment and retention toolkit for the adult social care sector has been produced as a practical resource for care providers to improve their recruitment and retention strategies. It contains case studies and useful ideas and templates for establishing effective recruitment and retention strategies to ensure a quality workforce.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/recruitment](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/recruitment).

### **Keeping up the good work**

As well as examples of successful CPD practice, Keeping up the good work includes templates to help employers and workers organise their CPD. Those templates are also downloadable as editable Word documents, so that employing organisations can adapt and reproduce them as required. Included in the guide is a suggested template for a personal development plan to assist you in your future learning and development.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cpd](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cpd).

### **Learning provider directory**

Skills for Care's learning provider directory is available to help you search for learning provision across England and contains details of accredited social care qualification programmes. The directory captures all the qualifications a particular provider offers, including how, when and where they deliver.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningproviders](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningproviders).

### **Learning through work**

Skills for Care has published Learning through Work, a series of learning modules that develop communication and number skills in the adult social care workplace.

They are designed to help supervisors deliver bite-size chunks of learning wherever natural learning opportunities arise as part of day to day care work.

The series contains seven bite sized learners' guides along with a manager's pack to help workers in various situations in care settings. The booklets include Reporting, Writing skills, Bodily functions, Physical Health, Using numbers, Number skills and How much, how often.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/publications](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/publications).

### ***Living with risk and Keeping risk person-centred***

Supporting people who use care services to take informed risks is an essential element of personalisation and encouraging 'choice and control'. Providing real choice and control for people who use social care means enabling them to take the risks they choose, particularly in the use of self-directed support and personal budgets.

Here you will find a range of resources to support your organisation in living with risk, including guidance leaflets and scenarios. In addition there is an extensive section entitled Keeping risk person-centred which has a wide range of resources to help you to embed the principles and practice within your organisation.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/risk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/risk).

### **Lone worker safety guide**

This guide is principally for domiciliary workers or those who do not work under direct supervision. However there are useful tips for all areas of social care. The guidance includes explanations of current legislation, employer and employee responsibilities, how to carry out risk assessments, what could be identified as hazards, potential safety measures, policies and procedures and templates and tools to use in your organisation.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/loneworking](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/loneworking)

### **Manager Induction Standards (MIS)**

The refreshed MIS (2012) set out clearly what a new manager needs to know and understand. They are aimed at those new to management as well as those new in post who have previously managed other care services. They are also intended for use with aspiring or potential managers to help support their development, although evidence of having met some of the standards will require actual management experience.

Although these MIS are not mandatory in the same way as the Common Induction Standards, they are definitely a measure of good practice and it is highly recommended that new managers should normally have demonstrated all the knowledge requirements of the recommended core standards within six months of taking up a management role.

Information on free downloadable documents and priced publications to support induction are available at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/mis](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/mis)

### **Principles of workforce redesign**

The principles of workforce redesign set out the key things employers need to take account of when changing the way in which their workforce meet the challenges of personalisation.

The publication assists employers to look at the skills, knowledge, expertise, values and attitudes of the people who make up their workforce and the significant role workers have to play in any transformation of services.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceredesign](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceredesign)



### **Providing effective supervision**

High quality supervision is one of the most important drivers in ensuring positive outcomes for people who use social care services. It also has a crucial role to play in the development, retention and motivation of the workforce.

This workforce development tool, including a unit of competence and supporting guidance and other resources, has been designed to assist organisations, supervisors and those receiving supervision to make the most of the opportunities that supervision offers.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/pes](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/pes)

### **Skills for life - a practical guide for social care employers**

The guide is a useful summary of why literacy, numeracy and information technology (IT) skills are important in social care and steps that can be taken to improve them.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/skillsforlife](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/skillsforlife)

### **Skill Selector**

If you are looking for accredited qualifications, ranging from awards, certificates and diplomas you may need help in selecting the right qualification and units for your workers to undertake. You can review and choose these using our Skill Selector. This is a simple online tool found on the Skills for Care website that will help you in quick and easy stages to build a qualification that best suits the needs of your business and the learner.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/skillselector](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/skillselector)

### **Workforce Development Fund**

The Workforce Development Fund (WDF) is a funding stream from the Department of Health disseminated by Skills for Care. It focuses on the achievement of qualification units and supports the ongoing professional development of staff across the adult social care sector.

The fund can only be utilised by adult social care providers that employ social care staff within England. For more information visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wdf](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wdf)

### **Work smart, work safe – combating violence against staff**

There are two resources exploring the responsibilities of the organisation and yourself to minimise the effects of any violent incidents where they occur – one guide for employers and one for workers and volunteers. They include a range of examples of policies and procedures, assessment tools, learning frameworks, ways of responding to violent incidents and information for workers.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/combatingviolence](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/combatingviolence)

# Appendix

## Checklist for choosing a learning provider

	comments	tick
<b>1. Knowledge and experience of social care sector</b>		
Experience of learning delivery in adult social care		
Learning they offer reflects the personal and individual nature of social care		
Views of people who use services and carers included in developing learning		
Core values of social care embedded in their learning programmes		
<b>2. Quality of delivery</b>		
What experience have other colleagues had of the provider?		
References and testimonies available		
Proven track record in delivering the courses you are interested in		
Has internal quality assurance processes and/or external accreditation e.g. kite marking, Ofsted, NAS endorsement		
<b>3. Design and delivery of learning</b>		
The offer meets your own learning needs analysis		
Learning is delivered at the time, place and frequency you want e.g. evening/ weekend if applicable		
Involves people who use services in the delivery		
<b>4. Accredited learning</b>		
Learning leads to qualification if required		
Qualification supported by Skills for Care		
If the learning is not accredited, learner gets a recognised national certificate e.g. St. John's Ambulance, Red Cross		
<b>5. Monitoring of learner progress</b>		
Learning contract/agreement between you, the learner and the learning provider is provided		
You are involved in monitoring of progress		

	comments	tick
Provider has adequate procedures for dealing with any issues/problems that may be identified		
You will be notified of any issues		
<b>6. Learner support</b>		
Appropriate tutoring and mentoring support for learners		
Agreed regular arrangements for support to meet needs of learner		
<b>7. Assessment</b>		
Sufficient assessor/verifier capacity to ensure learners can complete within the proposed timescales		
Agreed plan for workplace involvement in assessment process		
Considerations for confidentiality of any people who use services or their carers who may be involved in observational assessments		
Good access to computers if portfolios need to be submitted electronically		
Risk assessments are undertaken to minimise any risk attached to work based activity		
<b>8. Competence of those involved in delivering and assessing the programme</b>		
Tutors/mentors/assessors appropriately qualified		
Sufficient and recent experience in the social care environment		
Staff performance is routinely monitored and managed		
<b>9. Costs</b>		
Clear costings for learning programme		
Exploration of any public funds available in full or in part for this learning programme? (e.g. SFA/WDF)		
Programme is affordable and good value		

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