Skills for Care are keen to develop a partnership relationship with learning providers to ensure that between us we drive high quality learning provision for care employers and their staff.

Backdrop:

Due to a major government reform of Apprenticeships, the current system of ‘frameworks’ is being replaced by ‘standards’.

The standards are two-page documents listing the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed for being competent in your role. Adult Care Trailblazer group wanted to keep the Diploma in the new Standards. English & maths still a requirement.

The Standards have changed the approach to completing an Apprenticeship, it will no longer be about collecting a number of qualifications. Instead it is about learners being able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills against an agreed set of outcomes. These have to be assessed throughout and the result graded at the end of the Apprenticeship by somebody independent, the end point assessment organisation (AAO)

Four job roles are the subject of the new Apprenticeship standards:
- **Adult Care Worker (level 2)**
- **Lead Adult Care Worker (level 3)**
- **Lead Practitioner in Adult Care (level 4)**
- **Leader in Adult Care (level 5)**

Update:

SASE Frameworks due to be switched off 29th December 2017 in line with the introduction of RQF qualifications 1st Jan 2018.

The TB Group are currently working with DfE on a number of amendments to the current Standards and Assessment Plans, these are not signed off yet but we wanted to give you prior notice.

Following feedback from DfE, the way the Care Certificate is referred to is being changed. Rather than stating that learners will need to complete ‘The Care Certificate’ they will have to ‘complete the 15 standards as set out by the Care Certificate’ which are referred to as part of CQC expectations (CQC Inspectors Guide).

These changes, and feedback from the sector, have led to further debate within the TB Group and they have agreed to remove the requirement for the CC at L4 and L5. This is also yet to be agreed by DfE.

Assessment Plans:
- L4 assessment has been agreed (pending small amendments) and funding cap agreed at £5,000.
L5 assessment plan is delayed due to agreement on funding. The TB group have submitted further costings to DfE which will also lead to further amendments to the published L2 and L3.

This includes the removal of service user testimony requirements as well as some amendments to assessor and IQA requirements. We don’t currently have all the finer detail on this but will make sure you receive it when we do.

Who is involved?
- **Employers:** Workforce & workforce development planning, good recruitment and induction processes in place, support for staff and commitment.
- **Employees:** Commitment (both apprentices and colleagues as mentors)
- **Service Users:** Best outcomes at the centre of all delivery. Currently service user testimony is required for passing through the Gateway to be ready for EPA, however the Trailblazer Group have made the decision to remove this requirement and this has gone to DfE for approval
- **RoATPs (Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers):** Learning Providers who must be on the register
- **RoAAOs (Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations):** End Point Assessment organisations must be on the register. End Point Assessment must not be delivered by the same learning provider.
- **Awarding Organisations:** Accreditation of Diploma element of Apprenticeship Standard
- **Ofsted / ESFA:** Funding English & maths, Auditing quality, inspection…
- Trailblazer groups: Creating the Standards & assessment plans, reviewing standards
- **Skills for Care:** Commissioned by Trailblazer group to carry out EQA, support for employers and learning providers
- **CQC:** Regulating social care provision including; recruiting and training suitable workers

**Funding:**

We do not set the funding rules so any specific or detailed questions you have should be directed to the ESFA, however we are happy to take issues back to them on your behalf.

Government has set L2 & L3 at £3000 – we have been in discussions with DfE about the L4 & L5 funding cap. Level 4 and 5 funding band has been raised to £5000 but the TB group have gone back to contest higher for Level 5.

Levy payers (payroll over £3million) must pay into a digital account – the amount you have to pay depends on payroll. Digital accounts are now open for levy paying employers to sign up.

Non levy payers are not required to pay this.
Government pay 90% of Apprenticeship costs and employer pays 10% (this also kicks in when levy pot runs dry). This is split over the duration of the programme (min 12 months) and paid monthly. 20% of the funding band maximum (not agreed price) is held back until the end to cover the end point assessment costs.

Government pay learning providers directly for English & maths.
There are additional incentives for example; if you train an apprentice aged 16-18 years old - £1000 and for micro-employers (less than 50 staff). We have included our guidance for employing 16-18 year olds in your packs, this may help with your marketing messages.

Two excellent calculators available to access, to help employer’s budget costs, they like it and find it clear to use.

Official SFA: https://estimate-my-apprenticeship-funding.sfa.bis.gov.uk/

Unofficial Funding Apprenticeships System (this has more detail): http://www.fas.report/

Workforce Development Funding:

WDF is a financial contribution towards the cost of workers completing social care units and qualifications, meaning employers can claim back a proportion of the costs of learning and development to support things like backfill costs, mentoring etc. This is still available for Apprenticeship provision, both standards and frameworks.

A list of acceptable units for funding: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wdfunits

Funding is calculated on the credit size of QCF units at £15 per credit.

There will be new additions to the fund:
- RQF level 4 certificate in principles of leadership and management in adult care - £400
- Lead to Succeed learning programme - £350

Important for learning providers to promote this and support employers to access. Please keep an eye on our WFD webpages for all updates and an FAQ that we are developing

RQF:

As of January 18 all qualifications will need to meet RQF regulations and social care diplomas are being revised in line with this date.

The adult social care sector approach:
- When Ofqual announced this, SfC and Awarding Organisation partners agreed a way to ensure that the ethos of the RQF remained (allowing AOs to be innovative and responsive), but to also ensure some consistency for our sector (who like and understand QCF).
- SfC agreed to produce Qualification Specifications – documents outlining the core, mandatory content for the L2-L5 Diplomas, along with some other details such as an approximate Total Qualification Time, assessment principles, some general requirements for optional units.
- AOs will use these Specs to develop their qualifications to ensure consistency and that qualifications include content agreed by the sector. But they can adapt them to 'make them their own’, address a particular gap in the market, or respond to what Centres and learners want and need.
- AOs will submit their qualifications to SfC for review, and if approved against the Specification, they’ll be given a SfC logo to use to promote the qualification and we’ll list it/promote it via out networks.

SfC suggest that learning providers choose an awarding organisation that uses SfC approved qualifications. That is what we’ll be promoting and providing information on, and what we’ll be encouraging employers to ask for.

Specifications are available on the SfC website.

In relation to Apprenticeship Standards:
- The Standards currently contain QCF qualifications.
- The inclusion of the qualifications was challenged by BIS (at the time), but the Trailblazer Group were adamant they wanted to include the qualifications and were successful in this.
- The standards will be reviewed over the next few months to look at how the RQF qualifications are incorporated.
- Only one qualification can be named within a Standard. RQF titling may not be as straight forwards as QCF as AOs can use different names.
- The TB Group are already in discussions about this.
- When the Standards are revised, we encourage learning providers to read this information very carefully to ensure that they offer learners the right qualifications for inclusion in the Standard.

What Employers are looking for in Learning Providers:

Apprenticeships have always been high on the agenda and a popular topic of conversation for employers. However, since the Reforms, SfC are hearing more and more from employers asking about Apprenticeships and expressing interest in either getting involved where they haven’t before, or moving from frameworks to standards.

- **Provider Readiness** They should be able to answer our questions.
- **Quality** Employers (generally) understand RoATP. And SfC endorsement. Check Ofsted. And EV reports. How can you demonstrate quality?
- **History of Delivery** Can you evidence your history? Have they heard about you from a network? Have you been recommended? There will be learning providers offering apprenticeships with little or no history of delivery, but have made the RoATP. These providers will have to undergo mandatory training before they can deliver. They will be case managed and supported on a 1-1 basis with an SFA account manager. They will be deemed pass or fail at approx. 6 months.
- **Negotiation** Employers recognise they are in control ‘We hold the budget’. You should be open to negotiating on delivery and cost etc.
- **End Point Assessment** Can you answer questions about EPA? Is there a plan in place? Can you explain the different approaches to EPA available? There are currently 6 Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations for Adult Care Worker and Lead Adult Care Worker – they will offer slightly different options and models. It’s the employer’s choice who they go with, but they may ask for some information or guidance from you.
- **Recruitment Service** Can you provide a free recruitment service?
- **Support** For some employers, Apprenticeships will be second nature, but for others, they might need a bit of hand holding through the Standards, regulations and systems. What additional support is on offer? How can you
support employers manage the requirements and regulations or gather evidence. Can you guide them from the Standards? How much support can you offer their learners?

Think about what employers want and need when you’re talking to them. Pre-empt their questions. Set their minds at ease. Remember, lots of employers who didn’t previously engage with Apprenticeships might now be doing so. Equally, many employers who did engage with Frameworks may now be nervous about the changes and may be stepping away from Apps.

This guide includes a table of actions where apprenticeships provision might be interrupted or come to an end.

Marketing Messages:

So we have heard what employers are looking for, we don’t want to teach you to suck eggs but want to share with you what employers are telling us.

We are hearing regularly from employers that they are dissatisfied with being bombarded by marketing from learning providers quoting ‘free qualifications’. They often tell us that learning providers are inflexible for example they only offer some optional units in the Diplomas or they will only visit during 9-5. We hear a lot about high turnover of Assessors which causes frustration for employers and they also say that Assessors don’t always have a good level of up to date knowledge about the sector.

These reforms are your opportunity to bust these myths and be responsive to their needs. It is essential that your messages to employers are clear and concise, they don’t need all the nitty gritty but your offer must be transparent and they do need to know how it will improve their business, recruitment, retention and quality. They also need to understand what their commitment is in terms of time, resource and money.

Employers tell us that they don’t welcome leaflets through the post or cold calling, those days are gone. So you should consider the way you promote your services. Employers respond better to information sharing relationships with learning providers, so think about using social media or running local events for employers to attend.

Focus on any added value you can offer for example running a free networking event for Registered Managers to attend with a CPD certificate at the end but weave in your marketing messages during the session. Remember to promote your unique selling points but try to avoid a hard sell. Demonstrate your expertise and build a relationship of trust with them, make yourselves the ‘go to’ organisation when they want support and training.

We also recommend focussing on the factors that keep them awake at night, their drivers. A classic example would be CQC inspection. The Key Lines of Enquiry are currently under consultation and we are waiting on the outcome of that over the next month. We have included a draft document which was in your packs, based on the proposed KLOEs.

Just launched: a new guide for care employers called ‘Good and Outstanding Care’. This will help them (and you) to focus on meeting the KLOE’s.
Another useful tool for you is the ‘Ongoing Learning & Development in Adult Social Care’ guide. We have heard that some CQC inspectors are referring to this during inspections! It is a good guide for you to cite in your marketing messages.

**Individual Employers:**

We wanted to briefly draw your attention to this area of the social care sector which could be a growth opportunity for learning providers. Individual employers are people who directly employ their own care workers (personal assistants). Approximately 235,500 adults receive direct payments from their local authority, and around 28% of these people employ their own workers. Around 65-66K employers. There is not a huge amount of data available about this workforce, but SfC estimate there’s around 110,000 people working as PAs. Individual employers and their personal assistants are a real untapped market for learning providers, but delivering apprenticeships and training is not without challenge.

Learning providers that are successful in this area tell us;

“I get real job satisfaction.”

“You are not confined to delivering ‘off the shelf’ programmes, you are doing something that is unique and flexible.”

“It’s about seeing people grow through training, you change people’s lives, it’s amazing.”

“The trainers know they have made a real difference – they love it!”

Working with individual employers and their personal assistants is a great way to challenge your workforce to work innovatively and give them real job satisfaction as they can see immediate effects of learning and how it changes lives.

Skills for Care will be developing a support offer for learning providers interested in working with individual employers and their personal assistants. If you’re interested in being part of the focus group developing the offer, or piloting the resources/workshops, please let us know at slqa@skillsforcare.org.uk

**Endorsement:**

Cavendish recommendation 5 was to ‘develop a rigorous system of quality assurance for training’. And so the endorsement framework was born.

SfC endorsement is slightly different to other quality assurance processes as it looks specifically at the social care provision within an organisation, as opposed to the organisations as a whole.

**Benefits:**

- Raise the profile of your business - we can direct employers who ask ‘can you recommend a learning provider’ straight to our directory so they can search for local and national providers, as well as search for specific approved courses.
- Quality mark - you can use the relevant quality mark on your marketing and publicity materials
- Product quality - commissioners of learning and development will feel assured that if they come to you, they will receive the best possible product. And we’re starting to hear that it’s not just employers asking for endorsed providers, its commissioners too.

- Quality assurance - employers looking for learning and development will be able to select from a list of provision which has been through a sector specific quality assurance process.

- Reflective tool - providers who have been endorsed have found the process to be an invaluable opportunity to review processes and practices.

By achieving endorsement our, you can say to employers:
- We support excellence
- We have good processes in place
- We deliver courses that are relevant and fit for purpose
- And most importantly, we have proven that the people who’ve accessed our courses are now delivering care better

We’ve just launched a new, streamlined system. We’ve streamlined the ‘dimensions’ LPs were assessed against from 6 to 4.
- Leadership and Management
- Quality assurance and improvement
- Staff development
- Working with learners

There’s lots of information on our new webpages, launched on Monday 3rd April. There are guides and webinars available on the website to talk you through endorsement, the different dimensions and how to complete the application form.

If you choose to complete the forms yourself, the process costs £1500 for organisations and £500 for individuals. Renewal is annual and costs £300.

We also offer a service for an additional £400 called a ‘site visit’ where one of our endorsement team will come out and go through the process of collecting evidence and completing the forms with you.

Another key change is that, if you’re already on the RoATP, the cost of endorsement is significantly reduced as you’ll already have been through important quality checks that apply across your organisation. So for organisations, the £1500 becomes £750.

What’s important is that this isn’t a pass/fail system. It’s a quality improvement system. So if you don’t quite hit the mark on first submission, you’ll join our Care Learning Coalition, our NEW learning provider club, and the team will provide you with an action plan to implement systems and processes, or gather evidence, to improve quality ready for endorsement at a later stage. Depending on the evidence submitted, you might be ‘endorsed’ or you might be ‘centre of excellence’.

We also approve endorsed providers learning programmes – and promote these via our website database. And we’ve also recently started approving e-learning.

In addition to these, SfC have started to produce learning programmes for licence to endorsed providers. There’s more information available on our website.
**Care Certificate:**

The Care Quality Commission expect that providers that employ healthcare assistants and social care support workers follow the Care Certificate standards to make sure new staff are supported, skilled and assessed as competent to carry out their roles. It is the employer’s responsibility BUT...

Employers may be looking for learning providers to support with the Care Certificate delivery as part of the Apprenticeship Standard and this is for you to negotiate with them.

There is more that can be achieved in a simulated situation than people think. Most of the Care Certificate maps to the level 2 Diploma – be smart about how you map this, there is a mapping exercise already completed.

Following a number of enquiries about the Care Certificate and the new standard, we will be updating our website guidance, so please keep an eye out for updates.

How competent are you and your delivery staff in the Care Certificate? If you answer 'not very' then this is an area we would recommend you upskill – maybe your delivery staff could complete the knowledge aspects of the Care Certificate themselves?

**Manager Induction Standards:**

The MIS are designed for new managers (or aspiring managers). They outline the knowledge needed in the first few months of management to get off the ground and set firm foundations for a successful management career. Think of them as the Care Certificate for new managers!

Manager Induction Standards have been widely used across the sector, with our 'old' workbook being extremely popular too.

Given the changing role of managers in social care, the updates to the social care qualifications, and sector feedback, the MIS have been rewritten.

Some new Standards includes
- Manage self
- Decision making
- Entrepreneurial skills and innovation

The MIS align with the L4 Certificate in Adult Care – considering the knowledge needed to enter into management or be a new manager. They provide the underpinning knowledge for the L5 Diploma/Leader in Adult Care Standard. Along with the revised MIS is the publication of a new workbook, ‘Becoming a New Manager’.

The new workbook is similar to how the CC workbook is laid out – in that it talks through knowledge, and gives the learner tasks to complete. LPs may want to consider using the workbook for learners to develop their underpinning knowledge, before implementing it and being assessed on their competency.

Work book costs £75.

*Discount available. For one week only! £65*

[Manager Induction Standards](#)
[Becoming a New Manager](#)
20% off the Job:

20% off the job learning is something employers are contacting SfC about this on a daily basis, this is one of their biggest concerns about the new Apprenticeship Standards.

Employers will need support in this area, so it’s important to explore this and share ideas.

SfC have sought guidance from ESFA to share with employers and learning providers and we have been advised not to issue guidance as this is an auditable requirement from the ESFA.

We can only reiterate the guidance that is already in the public domain and encourage learning providers to liaise with their contact at the ESFA for any further information, advice or guidance.

New guidance June 17:


End Point Assessment:

As of 30th June 2017 - 9 providers have been approved – NOCN, NCFE, Highfield, City & Guilds, Pearson, Innovate Awarding, Skills First, TQUK and GP Strategies.

These organisations are starting to publish their models of how they will manage the EPA process, so now is a very good time to start contacting them for more information.

Learners must get through the Gateway before they can start the EPA and they must have been on programme for over 12 months: achieve Diploma, meet the 15 standards of CC (not for L4/5 if approved), achieve Lit & Num, undertake self-assessment in last month which is submitted to EPA (witness testimonies from people who use services – applied to have this removed).

The situational judgement test must be completed first and if learners fail (not achieving 25-39 correct answers) this they can retake it one more time within 3 months after completing a professional review of performance and acted on its findings. It is vital that you prepare learners for this as they cannot retake a third time! How are you going to do this?

Professional discussions could be completed via Skype for example, if required. How competent / confident are your Assessors with professional discussions? And how confident are they at preparing the learners to do them?

CDP Opportunities:

- What CPD do you think your trainers and assessors need for the new world? Including meeting AO requirements
- What plans have you got in place for meeting staff CPD needs
- What can Skills for Care do to support you?
Possible CPD Examples:

- Social care market and provision on offer
- Flexibility in delivery
- Responding to individual needs
- Staying up to date with the sector changes
- Growing relationships/managing relationships
- Being current
- Online, digital, IT skills
- Quality assurance
- Professional discussion skills
- Shadowing opportunities
- Legislation updates
- Information sharing opportunities
- Consistency in approach
- Sharing skills

How SfC could help:

- Updates
- Website information
- Events
- Locality Manager support

Online Platform:

We have set up an online forum for Adult Social Care learning providers to talk all things Apprenticeships with each other using Facebook as the platform. For people who are already signed up to Facebook please follow this link and request to join.

Facebook is completely free and the group has been set to ‘private’ so only approved members will be able to see the content / posts.