



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

## **Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate: factsheet for training providers**

**September 2024**

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has introduced a new Level 2 qualification for the adult social care workforce. This qualification, which has been developed from the 15 widely used Care Certificate standards, is part of our commitment to recognising our care workforce for the professional career it is.

Currently over 50% of the workforce do not hold an accredited qualification but the sector is filled with experienced and committed colleagues who deserve to be acknowledged for the skilled care they provide. Our aim is that the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate will provide a route for staff to gain a recognised qualification, reaffirming care work as a career and helping to recruit and retain talent.

In March 2023, DHSC appointed Skills for Care to develop a qualification specification to enable better consistency in portability and standardisation in how the current standards are delivered, achieved, and assessed. This was following research into the current Care Certificate delivery which found that 48% of employers did not accept a Care Certificate from a prior employer and 37% of care workers had to recomplete this when moving jobs. These findings highlighted the need to distinguish the care certificate from other inductions and reduce the need for repeat training via an accredited qualification.

The content of the new qualification has been developed so that it represents best practice and should not deviate significantly from the standards as they already exist. The structure and format have not changed, but the specification includes small changes to include most up to date knowledge and baseline skills required to support people well and succeed in their roles. Additionally, the learning outcomes have been updated for an awareness of learning disability and autism to be consistent with learning outcomes from the Core Capabilities Frameworks.

### **Key Facts**

Under the Department's current plans, it is encouraged for care providers to prioritise enrolling staff who do not hold a relevant qualification on to the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification to enable them to benefit from gaining one. Staff who already hold a relevant qualification may be enrolled and complete the qualification if they want to. The Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate sits alongside existing Level 2 options such as the Level 2 Adult Care Worker Apprenticeship. We would not expect an individual to complete more than one of these level 2 options and it is up to each employer and learner to decide which option is best for them.

The Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate has a total qualification time (TQT) of 369 hours of learning. We expect this to take a new learner around 6 – 8 months to complete but an experienced care worker may complete this in a shorter period of time.

### **Interaction with other Level 2 Qualifications**

The Level 2 Adult Social Care qualification is available to learners who are aged 19+. Individuals can take the qualification at their own pace via an awarding organisation. The qualification does not contain any English and maths content so it may be more suitable for experienced individuals who need less support with these skills. An apprenticeship is a paid job where individuals learn through a combination of workplace training and off-the-job training. Apprenticeships take at least a year to complete and are available to learners aged 16+. It is important for younger learners, in line with Department for Education policy, to continue the study of English and maths until aged 19. This can be achieved through the Level 2 Adult Care Worker apprenticeship, and so this is a more suitable learning programme for this group. The apprenticeship can equip learners aged under 19 and above 19 with the skills they need for the future.

The Level 2 Adult Care Worker Apprenticeship should continue to be delivered by Awarding Organisations and Training Providers in their current form. The Level 2 Apprenticeship may be revised in the future and we are collaborating with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and Department for Education as they progress this work.

The current Care Certificate standards will still be able to be used as part of a robust induction process. The Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate has been built from the standards to reflect best practice and with the intention of this becoming the baseline measure. Additionally, the new Level 2 is an accredited qualification and is eligible for government funding.

Awarding Organisations have developed the qualifications and received approval from Skills for Care so the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate is available for delivery by educational institutions or training providers and has been since 3rd June 2024. A list of Awarding Organisations who have developed the qualification and had their qualification approved by Skills for Care and regulated by Ofqual can be found here [Approved Qualifications \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Approved-Qualifications)

### **Funding**

The Learning and Development Support Scheme will have a digital online claims service that allows adult social care employers to claim funding for certain training courses and qualifications on behalf of eligible care staff. Funding will be available for eligible courses and qualifications that have been both paid for and started between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 (inclusive).

The Learning and Development Support Scheme approved course list includes the **Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate Qualification**. Eligible employers can claim

funding for the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate on behalf of eligible care staff for up to £1500 per qualification. For the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate, a combined claims model will apply, wherein employers must claim 60% of the reimbursement value upon their employee starting the qualification, with the remaining 40% reimbursement provided upon proof of course completion.

This funding is more limited than the previous scheme with no dedicated funding specifically for the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate.

After expressing interest in using the online claims service through the **form**, ASC employers will be contacted by NHSBSA to start the onboarding process in due course. This is a phased onboarding process, guided by NHSBSA. For the first few months, access to the online claims service is only possible through an invitation from NHSBSA.

ASC employers must complete, or have completed, the ASC-WDS. Once the new account is verified and the onboarding process is complete, eligible ASC employers can submit claims on behalf of their employees. To claim, employers will need to provide evidence as outlined in the 'Evidence requirements' section

Full details of how to access the funding and submitting claims from the Learning and Development Support Scheme can be accessed in the guidance [Learning and Development Support Scheme for the adult social care workforce: a guide for employers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/learning-and-development-support-scheme-for-the-adult-social-care-workforce-a-guide-for-employers).

For qualifications:

- employers should claim using the combined claims model, wherein employers must claim 60% of the reimbursement value upon their employee starting the qualification, with the remaining 40% reimbursement provided upon proof of course completion
- the initial 60% reimbursement claim must be made by the earliest date of either 21 March 2025 (inclusive) or within 3 months after the qualification start date. Late claims submitted between 22 and 31 March 2025 (inclusive) may be considered on a case-by-case basis
- the remaining 40% reimbursement claim must be made within 3 months of completion. When an eligible qualification has been both paid for and started between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025 (inclusive) but completion extends beyond 31 March 2025, completed claims can be submitted up to 31 December 2026

The remaining 40% reimbursement for qualifications will only be provided if the training has been completed.

Where a training course is completed but not passed (for example, failure to pass the final assessment), reimbursement may still be made provided proof of completion is supplied.

Note that the overall funding pot is limited. Once this has been exhausted, claims submitted will not receive reimbursement.

More information and guidance on how to access the funding and submitting claims can be found here ([Learning and Development Support Scheme for the adult social care workforce: a guide for employers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/learning-and-development-support-scheme-for-the-adult-social-care-workforce-a-guide-for-employers)).

### **Non-UK Nationals**

Care staff do not need to have British citizenship to qualify for the Learning and Development Support Scheme as long as they are legally employed in England and have a UK National Insurance Number.

### **Key features of the qualification**

**Initial assessment and needs of the learner** – It is expected that centres delivering the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate will carry out an initial assessment process. This process should ensure the learner can demonstrate the full requirements or, if needed, act as an advisory process so the potential learner can reach the required standard to achieve the qualification.

**Variety of delivery** - Delivery and assessment should be appropriately planned to ensure the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate is accessible for all and can be delivered across a range of care settings in the sector, in line with the assessment principles and additional guidance. Employers and centres should adopt a flexible approach to the delivery of the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate based on their current training and induction practices. An employer may decide to complete the qualification alongside employer specific induction and mandatory training or enrol learners onto the level 2 once they have completed their induction. However, the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification does not replace the need for employers to provide a robust induction including all mandatory training.

**Assessment models** - The qualification assessment strategy incorporates good practices as required within the Skills for Care & Development Assessment principles and Skills for Care JABQG Additional Assessment Principles guidance Jan 2024 003. These principles support best practice in maintaining standardised approaches, upholding the rigour and integrity of work based qualifications in the sector. The amount of direct observation required should be appropriate to the qualification time, level and content, while considering the needs of the learner and setting. Centres should discuss and agree their assessment approach with their Awarding Organisation.

The sector has delivered the prior recommended Care Certificate standards since 2015, therefore there may be existing assessment skills in the workforce which could be utilised in the assessment and qualification process. The Department of Health and Social Care and Skills for Care have been clear with Awarding Organisations to support centres to consider how these skills could be safely utilised and developed e.g., through the role of an Expert Witness as part of the assessment process.

If there are concerns around how direct observation will be carried out, for example, if employees are working in domiciliary care roles, then a conversation needs to be had with Awarding Organisations around what is possible, reasonable and appropriate for the organisation or circumstances.

**Recognition of Prior Learning** – As highlighted in the qualification specification, it is expected that centres delivering the qualification clearly set out how prior learning (e.g., mandatory training, prior Care Certificate standards training) can be safely utilised where appropriate in the assessment process. This is particularly beneficial for those with experience in care enrolling onto the qualification with the assurance of where their skills can be evidenced and what can be taken into consideration as prior learning. Where relevant prior learning is identified it is expected that a learner's number of learning hours could be reduced.

**Partnership and clear communication** – Employers, centres and learners should have a clear understanding prior to undertaking the qualification of the commitment of the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate with each taking an active role in its achievement.

**To support progression in the sector** – Beyond the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate, there are a range of other qualifications and work-based training options that will help carers to upskill and progress in their career, including apprenticeships from Level 2 – 5. It will be at the employer's/care worker's discretion as to the learning they choose to access. Employees who have completed the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate will be able to progress onto other types of learning and qualifications in the Care Workforce Pathway. Including the Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care. To find out more about the new Care Workforce Pathway, please visit: [Care workforce pathway for adult social care \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://skillsforcare.org.uk).

**To improve consistent delivery and portability** – The introduction of the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate aims to ensure better consistency in portability and standardisation in how the current standards are delivered, achieved, and assessed.

**Digital Skills** – The department have highlighted Digital Skills as a key learning and development priority for care workers. The use of digital technologies has been referred to throughout the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate qualification criteria and assessment guidance where relevant.