

A black and white photograph of a woman with glasses, wearing a dark top, sitting at a desk and writing on a document. She is looking down at her work. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window and some indoor plants.

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# Arranging and paying for training in positive behavioural support

November 2019

## **Arranging and paying for training in positive behavioural support**

Published by Skills for Care, West Gate, 6 Grace Street, Leeds LS1 2RP [www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

Skills for Health, 4th Floor, 1 Temple Way, Bristol, BS2 0BY [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

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# Introduction

Adult social care workers, including managers, need to have the right skills and knowledge to support people who display, or are at risk of displaying, behaviours which challenge.

This guide is for people involved in designing, delivering and/or commissioning PBS training in adult social care organisations.

It explains what workers need to know and do to deliver high-quality positive behavioural support (PBS), outlines standards for PBS training and gives you tips about commissioning and/or designing PBS training.

The learning in the guide will help you to arrange training that meets the needs of the people you support, your staff and your service.

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# 1. Background: what is positive behavioural support?

Positive behavioural support (PBS) is a recognised way of supporting people who display, or are at risk of displaying, behaviours which challenge.

PBS is a way of:

- understanding behaviours which challenge
- assessing the broad social and physical context in which the behaviour occurs
- planning and implementing ways of supporting the person which enhance quality of life for themselves and their carers.

It's based on recognising each person's individuality and their human rights, the importance of self-determination, and accepting that behaviours which challenge develop to serve an important function for people.

It rejects the use of aversive and restrictive practices, but acknowledges that for some people, at some times, an authorised restrictive practice (possibly including a physical intervention) may be necessary – but only when it's legally and ethically justified to prevent serious harm to the person or others.

It's important that adult social care workers have the right values, skills and knowledge to offer positive behavioural support, and therefore, they need high-quality training.

There's lots of reports and guidance about PBS available - this guide summarises the key points about training and development for PBS and links to useful resources.

## **How can PBS support an individual?**

The process of PBS is based on using functional assessments to plan interventions to improve the quality of life for an individual, and reduce the number, intensity and duration of incidents of behaviours which challenge.

Evidence suggests that prevention and reduction of behaviours which challenge occur best when there's support which:

- increases the person's quality of life, inclusion and participation
- defends and supports valued social roles
- uses principles and procedures from behaviour analysis to assess and support behaviour change and other complementary, evidence-based approaches.

## How can you put PBS into practice?

To put PBS into practice you need to ensure that:

- your workers and organisation have the right values
- everyone understands the theory behind PBS
- there's meaningful participation from people who need care and support and/or their families
- workers have the time and skills to complete the process
- staff get high-quality training and good practice management
- there's ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the process.

## 2. Principles for arranging positive behavioural support training

When you're arranging PBS training, consider these key principles.

- Training should be based on the actual needs of the individual(s) being supported.
- Training should be consistent with your organisation's policies and procedures, and supported by its culture and practices.
- Training should be proportional to the behavioural support plan for each individual, with positive approaches taught before, and given significantly more time than, any restrictive practices.
- Learners should be assessed at the end of training, and in the longer term, to ensure that they put the skills and knowledge they've learned into practice.
- People who need care and support, families and carers should be involved in planning their own support and in training.



### 3. What should workers know about positive behavioural support?

PBS training should ensure that all workers develop the skills and knowledge outlined for each area of the **PBS competence framework** (PBS Academy, 2015), and should adhere to the **Standards for training** (PBS Academy, 2017).

These standards are for those involved in the design, purchase or delivery of PBS training, including external learning providers and in-house training teams. They provide a set of standards that PBS training should meet.

They can be used to:

- develop a whole organisation approach to PBS
- design training and/or education about PBS
- develop assessment tools to evaluate individual and group performance.

Download the framework from:

[pbsacademy.org.uk/pbs-competence-framework/](https://pbsacademy.org.uk/pbs-competence-framework/).

Download the standards from:

[pbsacademy.org.uk/standards-for-training/](https://pbsacademy.org.uk/standards-for-training/).

## What should workers learn?

Learners should understand how to work in a positive and non-aversive way, which includes:

- offering proactive support for a good life
- adapting a person's environment
- helping the person to develop an alternative behaviour to achieve the same purpose, by developing a new skill
- using strategies designed to calm or divert people who show early signs of distress
- carrying out, or participating in, functional analysis and design of behaviour support plans
- implementing behaviour support plans
- recording and reporting
- (for some people) carrying out restrictive practices
- monitoring the implementation of behaviour support plans
- demonstrating good practice and challenging poor practice
- organising support in the most effective way
- teaching skills to other people.

They should only be taught to implement these strategies as approved and prescribed for, and planned with, the individual(s) they support.

Learners should also have an appropriate level of awareness of the specific needs and conditions of the individual(s) they support, which might include an understanding of dementia, psychosis, autism, borderline personality disorder, head injury, trauma, anxiety, learning disability, sensory impairment etc. and the ways in which these conditions may lead to behaviours which challenge.

## Adult social care qualifications

When completing a health and social care diploma, you can select units within the optional section that are appropriate to your job role. In relation to PBS, talk to your learning provider about qualifications and optional diploma units that'll develop your skills and knowledge in:

- supporting individuals who are distressed
- providing active support
- understanding, implementing or leading positive behavioural support
- mental capacity.

If you're supporting autistic people, you could also consider units that cover:

- communicating with autistic people
- person-centred approaches
- sensory and environmental needs of autistic people.

If you're teaching others about PBS, you should hold, or be working towards, a teaching qualification, for example:

- Postgraduate Certificate - Teaching and Learning in Professional Practice.

The Register of Regulated Qualifications provides a full list of available qualifications at: [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk).

## 4. Who should attend training?

It's important that everyone that's involved in PBS can access training, including people who need care and support, families, advocates, support workers, practice leaders and managers.

The minimum requirements are:

- all **support workers** should receive PBS training that's refreshed, at least, annually and monitored in practice
- all workers with a **leadership** role should complete, or be undergoing, more extensive PBS training, which includes practice-based assignments, independent assessments and leadership skills
- all workers with a role of **assessing or advising** on PBS should complete, or be undergoing, externally-validated PBS training. This should include both practice and theory-based assignments, with an independent assessment of performance at Regulated Qualifications Framework level 5 or above
- **bank, agency, casual and self-employed** workers should receive training and support in line with all other workers in the team
- learning must be offered to **people who need care and support, families, carers** and anyone in their wider support network, proportionate to the level of their involvement in PBS

- all workers involved in the **development or implementation** of PBS strategies should receive supervision from an individual with more extensive PBS training and experience
- **consultants** should be supervised by an individual (within or outside the organisation) with a relevant postgraduate qualification, for example, applied behaviour analysis, positive behavioural support or clinical psychology
- where **physical intervention** is used, all workers should receive regularly updated training (at least annually) in a suitably certified physical intervention training programme and understand the Mental Capacity Act
- at least one member of the **executive team or board** (and their equivalents in non-regulated services) should have experience and training in using a PBS approach with individuals. Board members or their equivalents who authorise the use of restrictive interventions in their organisations, must fully understand PBS and any physical interventions which they authorise
- anyone who is a **registered nurse** for people with a learning disability should have the knowledge and skills identified in the ‘Framework for working with people whose behaviour is perceived as challenging’ (LIDNAN). This should be either as part of their pre-registration training (from November 2015) or continuous professional development for those who qualified before this date.

## Putting it all into practice

As well as training, good PBS needs to be supported by ongoing development, including:

- all workers involved in the development or implementation of PBS strategies should receive supervision from an individual with more extensive PBS training and experience
- the learning must be supported by the culture of the organisation, including good practice management (including debriefing and supervision) and joint working with relevant professionals
- staff must also be trained to enable and empower people, support people to 'self-care' and provide active support
- the outcomes of the learning should be assessed and evaluated.

Many people find it useful to join a local or national PBS community of practice, to access peer support and keep up-to-date with best practice. You can find a list of local contacts at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/PBSCoP](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/PBSCoP).

## 5. Choosing the right learning provider

You might choose to commission an external learning provider to deliver PBS training or develop your own staff as trainers.

Those responsible for the **delivery of training** should satisfy **all** of the following.

- Demonstrate competence in PBS as per the PBS Competence Framework, for example, through a recognised qualification or accredited training that meets these standards, such as a diploma or certification in PBS, BSc PBS, MSc Applied Behaviour Analysis/PBS or equivalent.
- Demonstrate competence in the delivery of training, for example, through a:
  - recognised award such as ENB 997 or 998 (Teaching and Assessing in Clinical Practice)
  - Level 3 Award or Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training
  - Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training
  - standard such as qualified teacher status or registration with the Higher Education Academy
  - professional health, social care or education qualification that involves training others as a part of the required competencies.



## Experience in the delivery of practice-based training

Those responsible for **supervised practice-based training** should satisfy **all** of the following.

- Demonstrate competence in PBS, for example, a recognised qualification in PBS or behaviour analysis, or equivalent.
- Undertake train the trainer, coaching and/or practice leadership training.
- Experience in the delivery of practice-based training.

Those responsible for **workforce development and training** should:

- ensure that supervised practice occurs and that there are clear processes to ensure effective recording and monitoring of supervised practice hours by participants
- evidence a commitment to their own continuing professional development and ensure that their training needs are met, including updating their qualifications and/or training where relevant, attending in-house and external refresher courses, and keeping records of their continuing professional development activities.

## Questions to ask a learning provider

We recommend using a Skills for Care endorsed provider when commissioning any learning and development. Here are some questions that you can ask learning providers to help you to assess whether the training meets the needs of your organisation.

- Can they evidence bespoke learning to meet the specific needs of the individual or service?
- What qualifications do the people delivering the learning have – has the person attended a university accredited course on PBS? Do they have a teaching qualification?
- Can they provide examples of services that have previously applied the learning?
- Does the proportion of the training content conform to the balance of proactive/reactive strategies in the individual's support plan, and include any restrictive practices that are planned?
- Does the learning provider have a system of feedback or testimonials that you can check?
- Does the learning contain an element of competence testing, for example observations or role play testing, as well as verbal competence and reflection?
- Does the learning provider have a system in place to feed back about learners who are unsafe in their practice?
- Can the learning provider describe the biomechanical issues of any techniques that are taught?

- Is the learning consistent with, or integral to, the process of functional analysis and formulation?
- Can the learning provider offer support to your organisation following the learning provision?
- Can they help with plans or suggestions about how training and learning should be monitored to make sure that it's working in practice?
- Has the learning provider been accredited by undertaking a rigorous external process?

## Training accreditation

Currently there's no scheme to regulate or accredit PBS training courses.

Accreditation is not mandatory. However, you might feel more confident contracting with trainers who are endorsed in some way, and some service specifications or contracts ask for this.

Some endorsement options are:

### British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD)

BILD certifies organisations, training programme content and trainers that provide training in restrictive practices that meets the Restraint Reduction Network standards, 2019.

[www.bild.org.uk/our-services/pitrainingaccreditation/certification-homepage/](http://www.bild.org.uk/our-services/pitrainingaccreditation/certification-homepage/)

## Skills for Care endorsement

Our endorsement framework is a mark of quality for excellence in learning and development in the adult social care sector. Find endorsed providers and their courses at:

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

## Skills for Health Quality Mark

The Quality Mark is the ‘gold standard’ for benchmarking training delivery across the healthcare sector.

[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/  
qualitymark](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/qualitymark)

## Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (BACB)

BACB is a non-profit corporation established to meet professional credentialing needs identified by behaviour analysts, governments, and consumers of behaviour analysis services.

[www.bacb.com/credentials/](http://www.bacb.com/credentials/)



## Awarding organisations

Awarding organisations accredit RQF qualifications.

## Other accreditation systems

Other accreditation systems are available from organisations such as Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), Security Industry Authority (SIA) and General Services Association (GSA).

However, they tend to relate to restrictive practices, rather than PBS.



## 6. Paying for training

The service specification, contract and funding arrangements for any service offering PBS, should recognise the requirements in this guide.

There are additional sources of funding that you could access.

**The Workforce Development Fund** enables adult social care employers to claim back money towards the costs of their staff completing a range of adult social care qualifications and learning programmes. Find out more at:

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

**Individual employer funding** is available for people who employ their own personal assistants (i.e. individual employers). It can cover the cost of care related training and associated costs such as backfill and travel. Find out more at:

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

**Local Transforming Care Partnerships** (TCPs) may have funding to support PBS training or may commission training locally, which employers can access at little or no cost. Contact your local Skills for Care or Health Education England representative for more information. Find their details at:

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



Skills for Health  
Head Office  
4th Floor, 1 Temple Way  
Bristol  
BS2 0BY

**T: 0117 922 1155**  
**E: [contactus@skillsforhealth.org.uk](mailto:contactus@skillsforhealth.org.uk)**

**[skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://skillsforhealth.org.uk)**

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Skills for Care  
West Gate  
6 Grace Street  
Leeds  
LS1 2RP

**T: 0113 245 1716**  
**E: [info@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:info@skillsforcare.org.uk)**

**[skillsforcare.org.uk](http://skillsforcare.org.uk)**

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