



Department
of Health &
Social Care



Learning and Development Support Scheme (LDSS)

Frequently asked questions

Contents

What is the LDSS and what is its purpose?	3
How much funding is available?	5
What can the funding be used for?	6
How can I claim?	9
Further queries on eligibility	11
Onboarding process, timelines, evidence requirements	12
Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS)	13

What is the LDSS and what is its purpose?

What is the Adult Social Care Learning and Development Support Scheme (LDSS)?

The LDSS was launched in September 2024 by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). It supports the non-regulated care workforce to complete eligible courses and qualifications by contributing to the costs of training.

Adult social care employers can claim this funding after paying for eligible courses and qualifications for their eligible staff.

Why is this funding available?

Ensuring the availability of relevant upskilling opportunities for care staff is an essential part of the government's work to support the professionalisation of the care workforce. By completing courses and qualifications, care workers can gain recognition for their existing expertise, as well as developing new skills and specialisms.

Who can benefit / access the funding?

LDSS funding is a contribution towards the cost of training for the non-regulated care workforce in England. This includes care staff, deputy and Care Quality Commission-registered managers, and agency staff.

- Those without British Citizenship are eligible if they have a UK national insurance number and are legally employed in England.

There is no requirement for non-UK nationals to have resided in the UK for a specific time to qualify for funding.

There are no restrictions on the number of working hours that care staff must be contracted for, to be eligible for this support.

Who can claim?

Adult social care employers can claim this funding after paying for eligible courses and qualifications for their eligible staff. Employers must claim via a new online claims service, administered by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). To access the claims service, please sign up via this [onboarding form](#). See the 'How can I claim' section for more details.

What criteria must the employer meet in order to claim?

The employer (including local authorities) must:

- provide an adult social care service
- directly employ care staff in England
- have an up-to-date account on the [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set \(ASC-WDS\)](#).

Organisations providing care do not need to be CQC registered to claim.

How many employers have used the funding so far?

Over 3,000 adult social care employers have signed up to claim from the LDSS, in order to access government funding to support their staff to undertake training courses and qualifications. Since the scheme launched in September 2024, we've already accepted over 4,000 claims for the Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate.

This financial year, the LDSS is backed by up to £12 million – don't miss out on your chance to claim! Government funding has already supported adult social care employers from across the length and breadth of England, and all eligible adult social care employers are welcome to claim, regardless of the size of your organisation or where in England you're based. Employers can sign up now using the [onboarding form](#). After completing the form, you can expect to be contacted by NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) within 2 weeks, but timelines can vary with demand.

If you have any queries on the onboarding process, please get in touch with NHS BSA at asc.onboarding@nhsbsa.nhs.uk or phone 0300 330 0522.

How much funding is available?

What is the overall funding pot available in LDSS?

Up to £12 million is available this financial year. Please note that funding is limited. When the funding runs out, claims submitted will not receive reimbursement.

NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) will notify users of the online claims service when the funding is nearing exhaustion.

What is the maximum amount an organisation can claim?

The recipient solely, or in combination with any, or all, of its other parent organisations or subsidiaries, cannot submit claims for more than £400,000 total reimbursement from the scheme for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

This means that if one organisation has several locations or subsidiaries, the whole organisation can only claim up to £400,000.

How will the sector know when the overall pot of funding is nearing exhaustion?

NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) will notify users of the online claims service when the funding pot is nearing exhaustion.

What happens when the overall pot of funding is exhausted?

Once the funding pot has been exhausted, claims submitted will not receive reimbursement. Therefore, we encourage providers to submit their claims as soon as possible.

What can the funding be used for?

What can the funding be used for?

DHSC has published a [list of over 200 training courses and qualifications eligible for LDSS funding](#). This covers a range of topics – from end-of-life care and dementia, to leadership and digital skills. It is important to check the list to determine if the course or qualification is eligible for funding. Only the specific training courses and qualifications listed are eligible for LDSS funding.

The list also includes:

- **eligible awarding organisations** – courses and qualifications will only be funded if awarded by an eligible awarding organisation listed.

a **maximum reimbursement amount** for each item (per learner). These amounts have been updated for courses and qualifications paid for after 1 April 2025.

Can I claim for LDSS funding if the training course and qualification is delivered internally?

Yes, you may submit claims for reimbursement for eligible courses and qualifications that are delivered and assessed internally ('in-house training'). These must be supported by appropriate evidence as outlined in the '[Evidence requirements](#)'. This must include proof of payment.

This could include:

- proof of payment to an awarding organisation for learner registration and certification fees, or
- proof of payment to a third-party training subsidiary.

Is LDSS funding available for Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training ('Oliver's Training')?

Yes. DHSC intends to provide funding for Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training ('Oliver's Training') through the same digital claims platform used for the LDSS. This funding will be specific to Oliver's Training, separate to the overall LDSS funding already available for other training and qualifications. Training completed between April 2025 and March 2026 will be eligible for reimbursement. Further details will be provided in due course.

Can LDSS funding be used to cover travel costs, backfill pay, etc.?

No, LDSS funding can only be used for the cost of the course or qualification. The funding cannot be used to cover backfill pay, travel costs or any other associated costs.

How often is the list of eligible courses and qualifications updated?

The list may be subject to change at any time. It is recommended that you check the course list before paying for training. Those registered on the online claims service will be notified of any changes to the eligible course list.

Do courses/qualifications have to be delivered by certain training providers to qualify for funding?

No. For the financial year 2025 to 2026, adult social care employers can claim reimbursement for eligible courses and qualifications delivered by any training provider. However, qualifications must be awarded by an eligible awarding organisation. You can see all eligible awarding organisations alongside the list of eligible training courses and qualifications.

In the future, the courses eligible for reimbursement may be limited to those delivered by training providers that have been quality assured (see below information on the Quality Assured Care Learning Service). Any changes will be clearly communicated in this guidance. We recommend that employers check the [latest guidance](#) before booking training for their staff.

I would like to recommend that X course/qualification is added to the list of courses and qualifications eligible for funding. How can I progress this recommendation?

The list of courses and qualifications eligible for funding from the Learning and Development Support Scheme is intended to change over time, to support the adult social care workforce and meet the needs of those who draw on care and support.

Changes will be informed by the outputs of the [Quality Assured Care Learning Service](#), which is being delivered by Skills for Care on behalf of DHSC. The service launched in autumn 2024 and reviews the quality of individual courses and qualifications delivered by training providers, to ensure that training is of good quality, easily accessible, and meets the needs of the workforce and users of care services. Currently, the Quality Assured Care Learning Service is only available to training providers delivering [courses and qualifications which are already eligible for funding from the Learning and Development Support Scheme](#).

However, in time, the service will be extended to some training courses and qualifications which are not currently funded by LDSS. Once quality assured, these courses or qualifications may be added to the list of training eligible for funding. This decision will be made on the basis of market intelligence and sector need, guided by Skills for Care's expertise and government priority areas for upskilling. Any changes to the remit of the Quality Assured Care Learning Service will be published on the [Skills for Care website](#).

What is the Quality Assured Care Learning Service and how does this relate to LDSS funding?

The quality-assured care learning service reviews the quality of individual courses and qualifications delivered by training providers. It helps care providers find high quality training that meets their needs and that they can trust.

This service is funded by DHSC and delivered by Skills for Care. There is no cost to training providers to apply for quality assurance.

You can find guidance on the [quality-assured care learning service](#) on the Skills for Care website. This includes detailed information on the quality standards and the application process for training providers to have their training courses and/or qualifications quality assured.

For the financial year 2025 to 2026, adult social care employers can claim reimbursement for eligible courses and qualifications delivered by any training provider, provided that, in the case of qualifications, the qualification is awarded by an eligible awarding organisation. Eligible awarding organisations can be found alongside each item on the list of eligible training courses and qualifications.

In future, the courses eligible for reimbursement may be limited to those delivered by training providers that have been quality assured. Any changes will be clearly communicated in this guidance. We recommend that employers check the [latest scheme guidance](#) before booking training for their staff.

How can I claim?

I am an eligible adult social care employer (ASC), how do I claim?

ASC employers can access LDSS funding via a new online claims service, administered by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). To access the online claims service, employers must sign up via this [onboarding form](#). Once this form has been submitted, NHSBSA will contact you as soon as possible to book an onboarding appointment. NHSBSA generally aim to reach out within two weeks, but times may vary according to demand.

Following the onboarding appointment, employers can submit claims using the online claims service.

Employers can refer to the [Step-by-step guide to access LDSS funding in 2025-26](#) for an overview of the process.

When can I claim? How does the three month claims window work?

The LDSS is for eligible courses and qualifications that were paid for and started on or after 1 April 2024.

The LDSS is open to claims for eligible training courses and qualifications that have been paid for in financial year 2025 to 2026, as well as those paid for in financial year 2024 to 2025. **Regardless of the financial year in which the training course or qualification was paid for, a 3 month claims window applies:**

- for training courses - claims must be submitted within 3 months of course completion.
- for qualifications - claims are split into two parts: the '60 part' and the '40 part'. The 60-part of the claim must be submitted within 3 months of the qualification being paid for and started (whichever is the later date). The 40 part of the claim must be submitted within 3 months of qualification completion

If you have questions or concerns regarding the timeframes to claim, or any other query relating to the LDSS, please get in touch with our team at asclearninganddevelopmentsupport@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

How are my claims checked?

LDSS funding is administered via an online claims service, delivered by NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). The NHSBSA team check and verify each individual claim before processing payment.

How long does it take to be reimbursed?

Once your claims are submitted, they will be checked and validated by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) team. You can expect payment within two to six weeks of claims submission. However, please note that timeframes may vary according to demand.

I have claimed 60% reimbursement for a qualification started by my employee. However, my employee has decided not to complete the qualification. Do I need to return the 60% reimbursement?

No, you do not need to return the 60% reimbursement. However, you will not be able to claim the remaining 40% reimbursement, as this can only be claimed upon qualification completion.

Further queries on eligibility

Who is not eligible to claim LDSS funding?

LDSS funding is not available for:

- regulated members of the ASC workforce (including registered nurses, nursing associates, allied health professionals and occupational therapists).
- personal assistants, whose employers may not meet the criteria above. These employers should seek funding for training through the [Individual Employer Funding](#) scheme administered by Skills for Care.
- courses and qualifications completed as part of an apprenticeship. These employers may wish to seek funding through the [apprenticeship levy](#)

Is LDSS accessible to support international recruits?

Yes, those without British Citizenship are eligible if they have a UK national insurance number and are legally employed in England. There is no requirement for non-UK nationals to have resided in the UK for a specific time to qualify for funding.

If someone is a registered manager, but also a registered nurse, are they eligible to claim funding?

Yes, a registered manager can apply for LDSS funding for eligible training / qualification, even if they are a registered nurse as well. One of the roles must sit within the eligibility criteria, and the training must support them in the eligible role.

Do care employers need to be CQC registered to be eligible for funding?

No, there is no requirement for a care organisation to be CQC registered to access LDSS funding.

Onboarding process, timelines, evidence requirements

What is the onboarding form?

Funding available under the LDSS is distributed via an online claims service, delivered by NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). To access the service, you must sign up by completing an [onboarding form](#). This should only take around five minutes.

You must make sure you have an up-to-date account on the [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set \(ASC-WDS\)](#) before claiming funding.

What happens once I complete the onboarding form?

NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) will contact you as soon as possible to book an onboarding appointment to set up your account on the service. You can expect to be contacted within two weeks, but timelines can vary with demand.

Once your account is set up, the NHSBSA team will support you to submit your first claims, until you are confident with the new service.

If you have any queries on the onboarding process, please contact NHSBSA at asc.onboarding@nhsbsa.nhs.uk or phone 0300 330 0522.

How long does the onboarding appointment with last?

The onboarding call with NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) should take no longer than 15 minutes.

Is a recorded demonstration of the claims service available?

Yes, this is available [here](#)

What role does the employer senior responsible officer (SRO) play in the onboarding process?

The employer's SRO must create an account and sign their grant determination letter (GDL) in their online system. The SRO can add up to nine claim submitters for their organisation.

The GDLs can be found [here](#).

Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS)

What is the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS)?

The [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set \(ASC-WDS\)](#) is a free online data collection service that covers the adult social care workforce in England. It is managed by Skills for Care and commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

The service helps care providers run their business and manage their staff training needs. It can also provide access to funding for staff training.

The data collected is vital to the Government, DHSC, local authorities and the Care Quality Commission as it allows them to plan, fund and monitor the sector.

By opening an ASC-WDS account, providers can benchmark their business performance against others, record training and qualifications data, provide intelligence to decision makers, store and access key information about their workforce, receive discounts across Skills for Care products, and access LDSS funding.

How does ASC-WDS link to LDSS funding?

LDSS funding must be claimed by an eligible employer, towards the cost of eligible training courses and qualifications undertaken by eligible staff. To qualify, the employer (including local authorities) must meet all of the following criteria:

- provide an ASC service
- directly employ care staff in England
- have an up-to-date account on ASC-WDS.

What does an up-to-date account mean when referring to ASC-WDS?

To be eligible for claiming LDSS funding, you firstly need to create an ASC-WDS account. To create an account, you need to provide certain data. This includes some information about your workplace (8 questions), so questions like:

- Is your service CQC-registered? (Though we ask for this information, CQC registration is not a requirement for ASC-WDS registration nor access to LDSS funding)
- What's the main service you provide?
- How many staff do you have?

Skills for Care's ASC-WDS Support Team will then check the details you have provided in order to approve your account set-up.

Once your account is set up, you will need to add information about your workplace. This includes things like:

- Do you provide any other services?
- Do you have any current vacancies?
- How many staff have joined or left in the last 12 months?

After this, you can add your staff records, which includes:

- Personal details
- Demographic information
- Employment details
- Qualification details (for example, has the staff member completed the Care Certificate?).

As you are inputting this data in your ASC-WDS account, you will see a handy tool which will check your data and tell you exactly which answers you need to provide to become eligible for claiming funding. It gives you a big green tick when you've met all the minimum data requirements, so you know you're in a good position to proceed with your claims.

The ASC-WDS support team is available to help you with any questions about the service. Contact them on:

E. ascwds-support@skillsforcare.org.uk | T. 0113 241 0969