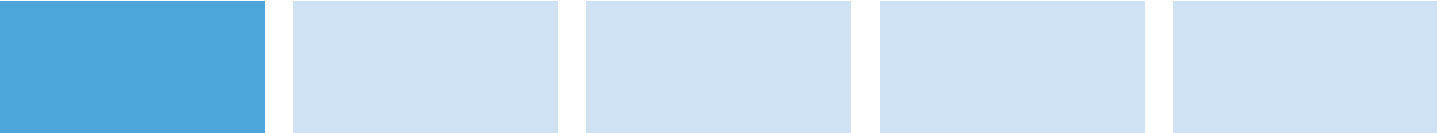


Endorsement Framework

FOR ORGANISATIONS

Stage 2 Excellence Award Guide



Endorsing excellence in social care education and training
organisations

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Introduction

WHY WE NEED AN ENDORSEMENT FRAMEWORK

Adult social care is a growth sector with over 40,000 employers employing over 1.75 million people, who enhance the quality of life for millions more. Treating people with respect, enhancing their rights and dignity and supporting them to have the lives they want are the values that lie at the heart of social care.

At a time when employers are facing financial pressure, the need for assurance on the quality of training purchased is all the more needed. This is what the Skills Academy's Endorsement Framework delivers with its clear badge of identification for endorsed training providers.

The Framework was born of a need from employers in the sector who needed to know they were using their resources to maximum effect and wanted a way to navigate through the minefield of selecting and purchasing quality training.

Gaining endorsement by the Skills Academy will give training providers market share and advantage and will give employers assurance that excellence is established and demonstrated in the training available to them.

EXCELLENT CARE BEGINS WITH EXCELLENT TRAINING

When we think of excellence, we think of something outstanding, a model of its kind, the very best there is.

When employers and learners begin looking for training, they want to know that what they buy or commission is the best possible choice.

One way of ascertaining this is to look for some form of independent validation, whether that is awards, accolades, others' experience, ratings or quality assurance marks. Gaining Skills Academy endorsement immediately indicates that your training provision is exemplary – specifically designed for the needs of social care employers and learners.

THE BENEFITS OF BEING ENDORSED

Gaining Recognition and the Excellence Award brings significant benefits to organisations including:

- Details of your organisation will be published on a Skills Academy database
- Employers looking for training will be able to select from a list of provision which has been through a sector-specific quality assurance process
- You will also be able to use the relevant Skills Academy quality mark on marketing and publicity materials for programmes which have been endorsed
- Commissioners of training will know that if they come to you, they will receive the best possible product.



RECOGNISED PROVIDER



EXCELLENT PROVIDER



EXCELLENT PROGRAMME

Organisations holding the Excellence Award will also have automatic membership of the Skills Academy. This will give a range of advantages:

- Status as a preferred organisation for development projects and pilot activities
- Mentoring and support opportunities

- Involvement in development of new materials or programmes
- Networking opportunities with other excellent providers and with employers
- Opportunities to contribute to debates and strategic developments
- Opportunities to attend Skills Academy events and seminars.

OVERVIEW

This guide introduces the route to the Excellence Award for organisations, and has been written to help education and training providers understand the dimensions, the requirements for submission, and to consider how they can provide evidence that they meet all the statements contained within the dimensions.

The Excellence Award provides a means for education and training providers to demonstrate that they understand how to engage with employers and learners and provide a positive and supportive learning environment, and that they do all this within the values and ethos of adult social care.

Education and training providers who meet the Excellence Award criteria will be designated a 'Centre of Excellence in Adult Social Care Training'. This status allows the training provider to use the Skills Academy Excellence Award quality mark in publicity and marketing material this will indicate to employers looking for training that the provision offered is of the highest quality. The Excellence dimensions have been developed in collaboration with employers in the sector, training providers, and people who use services.

This guide has been designed to help education and training providers to understand the requirements of the Excellence Award, and what evidence they will need to provide in order to show how they meet all of the Excellence dimensions.

The Excellence Award is designed to be straightforward and flexible, and to offer an

opportunity for organisations to demonstrate their own way of working with employers,

learners and service users. The Excellence Award sits alongside and should be read with the Skills Academy Recognition dimensions for education and training organisations. Organisations can only apply for the Excellence Award once they have demonstrated that they have met the Recognition dimensions. Further details of the Recognition dimensions and means of demonstrating that these have been met can be found on the Skills Academy website: www.nsasocialcare.co.uk.

The Excellence Award consists of eight statements. Education and training providers need to show that their processes, practices and provision comply with these statements. They will do this by preparing a self-evaluation application, which will be submitted to the Skills Academy for review by other training providers and social care employers.

Stage 2 Excellence Award dimensions and statements

DIMENSIONS AND STATEMENTS

- A. Equality, diversity and inclusion are intrinsic to relationships with learners, the workforce, employers and communities and constitute part of the continuous quality improvement targets for the organisation.
- B. Education and training providers' processes and practices provide a role model for the core values of a social model of care.
- C. Education and training providers' processes and practices, and in particular those relating to confidentiality and whistle-blowing, demonstrate adherence to the GSCC Codes of Practice.
- D. The needs of people who use services are placed at the heart of designs for training delivery.
- E. People who use services, and carers, are an integral part of the team who design, develop, deliver, assess and evaluate education and training provision.
- F. Education and training providers support the development and improvement of social care services and can demonstrate how their training provision makes a positive difference to the lives of people using services or needing support.
- G. Provision consistently promotes the potential of learning to benefit people emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically, and to contribute to community growth and sustainability.
- H. Education and training providers work towards enhancing social care as a positive career choice and celebrate the achievements of their learners.

EXPLANATION OF THE DIMENSIONS AND STATEMENTS

- A. Equality, diversity and inclusion are intrinsic to relationships with learners, the workforce, employers and communities and constitute part of the continuous quality improvement targets for the organisation.

What does this mean?

Social care training demands an approach to equality, diversity and inclusion which enables and empowers learners so that they can, in turn, enable and empower the people they work with. Your organisation may consider it appropriate to have in place means to measure the way in which the principles of learner involvement and empowerment are described and implemented. You could show the effects of such a policy on the way in which the organisation sets and meets its targets. You may also wish to consider how your organisation and the learners you work with make a contribution to the community in which you and they are placed.

Things you may wish to consider

- Have you got a policy on equality, diversity and inclusion?
- What targets are embedded within your policy, and on what basis are these agreed?
- How do you monitor, review and develop your targets?
- How do you describe and measure the effect of your training in social care on the broader community? (You may wish to think here about evidence drawn from learners' places of work, or voluntary work, or other ways of reaching

out to people who would not otherwise come into contact with a training organisation.)

- B. Education and training providers' processes and practices provide a role model for the core values of a social model of care.

What does this mean?

Your organisation's processes and practices may be established so that learners' and staff needs are met on the basis of a partnership and co-production rather than imposed by top down management decisions. This mirrors a model of care which focuses on the individual needs and desires of people who use services, and builds on each person's abilities.

Things you may wish to consider

- How are people employed in your organisation supported and confident in promoting equality and challenging discrimination and poor practice wherever they encounter it?
- How are your staff and learners supported to make their own decisions and shape their own daily lives?
- Does everyone focus on people's abilities and what they can offer?
- What steps do you take to ensure that facilities and activities within the organisation are planned with an awareness of the needs of people with disabilities?
- How do you ensure that the 'respect' agenda extends to all learners and staff, and also to people who use services, carers, employers and other stakeholders in training and development?

- C. Education and training providers' processes and practices, and in particular those relating to confidentiality and whistle-blowing, demonstrate adherence to the GSCC Codes of Practice.

What does this mean?

Issues relating to confidentiality are central to social care. The principles which underpin confidentiality in practice, and the need on occasion to 'whistle-blow' in the face of abuse or unacceptable practice, also apply to training and development organisations. Your organisation may wish to consider how it enables learners and staff to protect confidentiality and feel safe in raising issues which cause them concern. The GSCC Codes of Practice outline the principles which underpin confidentiality and whistle-blowing which may be transferred to your organisation.

Things you may wish to consider

- How do you use the Common Inspection Framework's guidance on safeguarding positively to ensure the welfare of learners?
- In addition to the GSCC Codes of Practice, how do you work with the guidance contained in other codes of practice – for example the Care Training Code, the Joint Awarding Bodies' Codes of Practice?
- What is your policy relating to whistle-blowing for your own organisation?
- What is your policy on whistle-blowing and safeguarding in relation to work carried out on employers' premises?

D. The needs of people who use services are placed at the heart of designs for training delivery.

What does this mean?

The purpose of training in social care is to improve the quality of the services available to people who use services or need support, and their carers. All programmes should be developed with these needs and desires firmly articulated at the core of design and delivery.

Things you may wish to consider

- How do you ensure that your programmes promote positive attitudes towards people whose voices are seldom heard?
- How do you take into account the needs of service users in deciding which programmes and courses to develop?
- How do you know when you construct, deliver, assess and evaluate programmes that they are consistent with the needs of people who use services, and carers?

E. People who use services, and carers, are an integral part of the team who design, develop, deliver, assess and evaluate education and training provision.

What does this mean?

Social work training has for some years required education providers to use the expertise of people who use services, and carers, in planning, delivering, assessing and evaluating training programmes. Social care training can learn from this. Your organisation may want to demonstrate

how you ensure partnership with people who use services across your provision.

Things you may wish to consider

- How do you consult systematically with people who use services, and carers, when developing and delivering your provision?
- How do you recruit people into your group of consultant experts by experience and ensure they reflect the diversity of people who use services?
- What steps do you take to remunerate or otherwise recognise the contribution made by experts through experience which does not interfere with any benefits they may receive?
- How is consultation built into the validation processes for your programmes and courses?
- How does your practice reflect the range of issues and debates with which service user organisations are engaged on a national basis?

F. Education and training providers support the development and improvement of social care services and can demonstrate how their training provision makes a positive difference to the lives of people using services or needing support.

What does this mean?

Employers approach training providers with a range of motivations – for example service improvement, business improvement, regulatory necessity. Yet the end beneficiary of any training is the service user. Your organisation may have a range of methods for finding out what the effects of training are in the way care services are

delivered, and the improvements that result for those who receive services.

Things you may wish to consider

- What structures do you have for discussing improvements in care delivery with service users?
- How do you record, monitor and review your training provision in light of the information you receive from service users?
- What steps do you take to resolve any differences between employer needs and service user needs which you discover as a result of monitoring the outcomes of training?
- What impact measures do you build into your planning, monitoring and evaluation systems to capture the effects of your training on the lives of people who use services?

G. Provision consistently promotes the potential of learning to benefit people emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically, and to contribute to community growth and sustainability.

What does this mean?

This statement relates to your own staff and learners and also to people who use services and their carers. Your 'community' may be internal to your organisation, or it may be the outside world in which you operate. We are looking for ways in which your organisation promotes growth and progression for learners as members of the workforce, and as active members of a socio-economic group.

'Progression' is seen in terms of development, not necessarily qualifications or new job roles. It may start with meeting Skills for Life needs (e.g. reading, writing and IT skills) and building confidence to grow into other skills. Your organisation may wish to demonstrate how its provision in training for social care reflects a broader mission to support equality of opportunity for all.

Things you may wish to consider

- How do you recognise growth amongst your learners which does not solely relate to qualifications or job promotion?
- How do you measure changes in learners' ability to understand and relate to people who use services?
- How does your mission statement relate to your organisation's effect on the community it serves?
- What evidence do you collect about the outcomes of your Skills for Life provision?

H. Education and training providers work towards enhancing social care as a positive career choice and celebrate the achievements of their learners.

What does this mean?

Entry into social care does not require formal qualifications or experience, and the work is often viewed as relatively low status. The sector therefore has to work hard to promote itself as offering demanding, interesting and fulfilling careers. Many people enter work in social care later in life having had jobs in other sectors; others come at a younger age, having had a fairly

negative learning experience at school. Many also make a positive choice to make a career in social care, and form the backbone of a stable long-term workforce. Education and training providers can have a key role in promoting the sector and the range of career opportunities available.

They can also offer a variety of means to enhance knowledge and understanding about the value of caring for the individual learner, people using services, and the wider community and society in which care is delivered.

Things you may wish to consider

- How do you use reflective learning as a vehicle to promote self-confidence amongst your learners in their role as a social care employee?
- How do you recognise and reward personal and occupational excellence amongst both your learners and your training and assessing staff?
- Do you have a way of capturing and celebrating compliments which runs alongside your complaints procedures?
- How do you promote and measure progression amongst your learners?
- How do you work with schools, careers organisations, Jobcentre Plus and other stakeholders to promote care as a positive career choice?

You will find detailed guidance on how to apply and how we review applications in the ‘Endorsement Handbook’ on the National Skills Academy website at www.nsasocialcare.co.uk