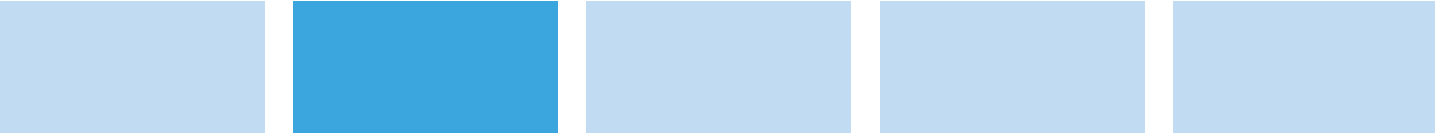


# Endorsement Framework

FOR ORGANISATIONS

## Stage 2 Excellence Award Readiness Check



Endorsing excellence in social care education and training **organisations**

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# Introduction

This readiness check is designed to help you determine whether your organisation is ready to make an application for the Skills Academy Excellence Award. It is for your own use, and does not constitute part of the application process.

**You are only eligible to apply for the Excellence Award if you are already a Skills Academy Recognised provider.**

The Skills Academy Excellence Award is concerned with processes as much as outcomes. The self-evaluation application form requires you to describe how you work and why you work in that way.

Key questions for you to bear in mind are:

- What we are trying to do?
- Why are we doing it?
- How are we doing it?
- Why do we believe this is the best way to do it?
- How can we improve what we do?

It will help if you think about these questions while you go through the readiness check and consider whether you are ready to apply.

# Using the readiness check

The readiness check is designed to help you establish whether you have the processes in place that are indicative of excellent education and training provision in adult social care.

Your training and development provision should be designed to meet the needs of a defined group of employers, learners, people who use services, and carers, and should be based on the values that underpin the social model of care. The provision may include apprenticeship frameworks, work-based programmes leading to vocational qualifications, short courses and bespoke programmes designed specifically to meet the needs of one employer or a group of employees.

The Excellence Award is equally applicable to colleges, work-based learning providers, employers offering a range of in-house training or private or voluntary sector training organisations.

If you are seeking Skills Academy endorsement, we would expect that your training and development programmes will have been developed in consultation with at least one employer and take into account the views and needs of people who use services and their carers<sup>1</sup> as well as employers and learners.

Individual people who use services and/or who are carers might be employers in their own right and may want to identify training needs for themselves or for the people they employ. People who use services and their carers will also wish to guide and influence your provision and should be among the stakeholder groups you consult and work with in partnership. It is important that you keep this in mind when considering who the employers are that you work with, and what the impact of your training activity is likely to be on employers' business outputs and the services offered to people who need support.

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<sup>1</sup> Carers UK use the term 'carer' "to distinguish those who provide care for others on an unpaid basis, apart from those who are paid (care workers, home helps and people employed by someone with a disability)".

# Evaluating your organisation against other sector quality marks

The Skills Academy endorsement framework builds on existing quality marks. If you have already been assessed successfully in respect of these, you will have been able to count this achievement towards some aspects of the Recognition dimensions. This will have enabled you to take a Fast Track route to Recognition.

Unlike Recognition however, there is no fast track route to achieving the Excellence Award. You must provide evidence to demonstrate how you meet each of the Excellence Award dimensions in full.

# Understanding the adult social care sector

The Excellence Award requires you to show how you work within the values of adult social care, and how you work in partnership with employers, learners and service users when designing, delivering and assessing learning programmes. The following questions will help you to think about what evidence you have, or could generate, to demonstrate how you use your knowledge and understanding of the sector.

1. What evidence do you have that you understand and work within the core values of the social model of disability as outlined in the GSCC Codes of Practice?
2. How did you develop your strategy for working with care sector employers?
3. How often, and by what means do you regularly and formally consult employers, service users and learners regarding the training provision you offer?
4. What evidence do you have that your training activities have had a positive impact on the lives of people who use services and their carers?

# Quality assurance and improvement

1. How has your formal statement relating to equality, diversity and inclusion been translated from policy to practice? (For example, you might consider how your policy works in relation to employers, learners and the communities you work with, and how it forms part of your quality improvement targets.)
2. How can you show that you are constantly using your quality improvement processes to enhance the range of training products and services you offer to employers?
3. What evidence do you have that you constantly improve/update staff involved in teaching, assessing and providing learner support?
4. What evidence do you have that you constantly improve/update equipment and materials used in teaching and assessment?
5. How can you show that you understand the needs of the employers you work with, and how these relate to the needs of people who use services, and carers?
6. How can you show that your training and development processes have a positive impact on the employer's business and the lives of people who use services, and carers?

If you can give answers to all or most of these questions, you are probably in a position to consider preparing an application for the Skills Academy Excellence Award.

**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](http://www.nsasocialcare.co.uk)**