

Apprenticeship Alert Newsletter

Skills for
Health



Welcome to the fifth edition of the Skills for Health (SfH) Apprenticeship Alert – Apprenticeship qualifications and developments special.

This issue focuses on Skills for Health's brand new suite of qualifications and related units which cover Health and related Support Services, Health Informatics, Pharmacy, Dental and

Optical Retail, which are starting to be made available on the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ). To view these log on to www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk

Qualifications and Credit Framework

What you need to know

From January 2011 all vocational qualifications including those for the health sector in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will be regulated within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Scottish qualifications will continue to be regulated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The new framework is a national initiative led by the UK Governments which will:

- Provide a flexible, modern system for vocational qualifications

- Give learners the opportunity to transfer credits between qualifications to avoid having to repeat their learning
- Help employers by describing levels of achievement in terms everyone can understand.

Background information and a range of helpful publications regarding the QCF can be found on the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) website (www.qcda.gov.uk).

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Hot News:

The Government announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review report of 20 October that Train to Gain would be abolished and adult apprenticeship funding is to be increased by £250 million a year by 2014-15.



Qualifications and Credit Framework

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Background

Skills for Health has been working closely with Awarding Organisations to develop a range of new QCF qualifications. Each qualification has been designed specifically to meet the needs of the health sector and we have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives from employing organisations, throughout development. Where relevant, we have also worked in partnership with other Sector Skills Councils and Professional and/or Regulatory Organisations.

When developing the new qualifications we have taken into account feedback received regarding the existing National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), in particular, ensuring that the new qualifications continue to measure occupational competence. Each unit is based on learning outcomes and the competence units may relate to one or more National Occupational Standard (NOS). Some units may only measure knowledge; the competence units measure a combination of knowledge and skill.

Each QCF unit can be assessed individually and a certificate of credit issued by the Awarding Organisation. This will support the use of units for a specific developmental need or Continuing Professional Development. However, as with NVQs, where a learner is undertaking the whole qualification the use of 'holistic assessment' is recommended.

Skills for Health have worked with Skills for Care and Development to align the sector Assessment Principles for the new qualifications. Assessment Principles are similar to the NVQ Assessment Strategies, but for QCF qualifications Awarding Organisations are now responsible for the assessment strategy. This must be compliant with the Regulatory Arrangements for the QCF (Ofqual, 2008). Some QCF qualifications will have different assessment strategies where the qualification is only awarded following successful completion of an examination e.g. Dental Nursing.

To maximise opportunities for credit transfer within the QCF, the majority of Awarding Organisations have agreed for all their units to have shared status which makes them freely available for other sectors to use within their qualifications. We have used units that have been developed by other sectors within our qualifications.

New Qualifications

Skills for Health's new competence QCF qualifications are as follows:

Health Sector

(available from January 2011 unless otherwise indicated):

Level 2

- Award in Health Informatics
- Certificate in Healthcare Support Services
- Certificate in Health Informatics
- Diploma in Clinical Healthcare Support
- Diploma in Emergency Care Assistance
- Diploma in Optical Retailing Skills
- NVQ Certificate in Pharmacy Service Skills (QCF) (Sept 2010) *

Level 3

- Diploma in Allied Health Profession Support
- Diploma in Blood Donor Support
- Diploma in Clinical Healthcare Support
- Diploma in Dental Nursing (Dec 2010)
- Diploma in Healthcare Support Services
- Diploma in Maternity and Paediatric Support

- Diploma in Optical Retailing Skills
- Diploma in Pathology Support
- Diploma in Perioperative Support
- NVQ Diploma in Pharmacy Service Skills (QCF) (Sept 2010) *

Health and Social Care Sector

(available from January 2011):

Level 2

- Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults) for England
- Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults) for Wales and Northern Ireland

Level 3

- Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults) for England
- Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults) for Wales and Northern Ireland
- Diploma in Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) for Wales and Northern Ireland
- Several other QCF qualifications for occupational competence have already been approved for use in this sector e.g. Level 3 and Level 4 Award and Certificate for Working with Substance Misuse.

Additional Information

Not all health sector qualifications are transitioning to the QCF. Awarding Organisations had to consider a business case for each qualification. Where there was low take-up which made a weak business case the pathways or qualifications may not have been transitioned to the QCF. This includes some of the Health NVQ pathways: Decontamination, Endoscopy, New Born Hearing Screening and Renal Support. Radiography and Clinical Imaging do not have separate qualifications, but two units from the existing pathways have been incorporated into the Level 3 Diploma in Clinical Healthcare Support.

Further QCF qualifications have also been developed to replace the Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs). Each Awarding Organisation is responsible for the transition of the qualifications they offer. Skills for Health monitors progress on this activity and reports to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. Further details of these qualifications can be accessed via each individual Awarding Organisation or at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk.

* The Pharmacy qualifications have been designed in partnership with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and representatives from across the UK. The level 3 qualification when taken with the new Level 3 Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science has been designed to meet the existing regulatory requirements for the Pharmacy Technician Role in England and Wales. Currently, this role is not registered in Northern Ireland.

QCF and Apprenticeship Events



The above Certificate and Diploma QCF qualifications will be used as a component within new SASE compliant Apprenticeship frameworks, which are due to go live in January 2011. Pharmacy is however an exception in that it will be live in March 2011.

Detailed information will feature in the next Alert edition. For more information on the QCF and the new health qualifications please email qualifications@skillsforhealth.org.uk

There will be a series of events this autumn for you to find out all you need to know about the QCF and the new qualifications. The aim of these launch events is to familiarise the health sector with the QCF structure, the new health qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks before they “go live” in January. Each event will consist of a presentation on the background and structure of the QCF, including the roles of Skills for Health, the Awarding Organisations and the health sector in developing the new qualifications.

We will also provide an introduction to the new health qualifications giving you the opportunity to navigate through the qualifications, to identify appropriate units for a range of roles and to identify career progression and opportunities for continuing professional development. In addition we will illustrate the requirements of the new Apprenticeship Frameworks.

Skills for Health staff will be on hand throughout the day to discuss any questions you have. Four events are scheduled:

- Wednesday 1 December 2010 – Reebok Stadium, Bolton
- Friday 3 December 2010 – Dexter House, Tower Hill, London

Unfortunately we have had an overwhelming positive response to these events and they are now full. However if you require information about the QCF please contact qualifications@skillsforhealth.org.uk

New Literacy & Numeracy Initial Assessment Tool

Skills for Health have designed a brand new tool for literacy and numeracy initial assessments specifically for use within the health sector.

Literacy and numeracy are the foundations of safe and effective work, as well as being key to development and learning. In the past the achievement of Key Skills – now known as Functional Skills – have sometimes been challenging for Apprentices. Skills for Health has recently developed literacy and numeracy initial assessment tools specifically for the healthcare sector, which help to identify the level of literacy and numeracy at which an individual is operating.

The tools are easy to use and are based on the adult literacy and numeracy curriculum. They work on an algorithm, changing the complexity of questions asked based on the responses to previous questions, so users will not be presented with questions that are consistently too hard or too easy. The questions have been contextualised for a range of healthcare settings to make the situations familiar and the assessment as relevant as possible.

At the point of pre-assessment for an Apprenticeship programme, the tools can be used to identify at the outset whether individuals may need to access additional literacy and numeracy support. The tools can support providers to put into place appropriate interventions for learners ensuring that they get the support they need and training can be focused and targeted.

Apprenticeship programmes can make a real contribution to organisations in terms of workforce planning and development and can be a solution to recruitment and retention challenges. In providing underpinning support to an Apprenticeship programme, the Literacy and Numeracy Initial Assessment Tools can help to make these programmes a success for both the individual and the organisation.

Visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/iatool to find out more and begin using it.

Support Worker progression

Support workers provide essential care to patients and assist senior staff in the delivery of holistic care. Team working ensures the delivery of high quality, productive and safe care across patient care pathways. The development of nationally recognised and transferable skills and education and training will increase the esteem of the people in these roles and provide pointers to career development.

The Department of Health have commissioned Skills for Health to:

- Strengthen and adopt consistent training and development of support workers
- Support transferability between employers through a common understanding of roles and education frameworks
- Stimulate the development of support worker roles
- Clarify the skills, knowledge and competence required when re-designing services
- Support the development of learning and development packages and encourage innovative learning methods (e.g. e-learning)
- Enable employers to get a more consistent application of roles and skills across care delivery teams.
- Enable a more mobile workforce that can adapt to new technologies and revised care pathways

- Increase the self esteem of support workers and maximise their potential.
- Improved understanding and acceptance of support workers role by staff and patients

The project will provide employers with guidance that will detail the core competences required for clinical support roles that can be adopted across all care pathways. Alignment with the requirements set out in Apprenticeship Frameworks has been crucial to ensure consistent application in practice.

Specific competences from the Skills for Health competence database have also been drawn together to illustrate the potential knowledge and skill requirements required from support worker roles across three care pathways:

- Maternity Support Workers
- Healthcare Support Workers (Acute Care pathway)
- Rehabilitation Support Workers

The final web-based product will be available in mid-November.

For more information please contact:

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Agreed Apprenticeship Branding and Key Messages for information sharing

Skills for Health, the Department of Health, NHS Employers and the National Apprenticeship Service have been working together to develop some strong branding and key messages to use when producing information for employers around Apprenticeships.

The aim of these key messages is to ensure that the main benefits of Apprenticeships within the health sector are presented clearly and that emphasis is placed on attracting good candidates into health sector Apprenticeships by positioning the sector as an attractive place to work. An apprenticeship in the health sector must be seen as giving a potential candidate more than just a 'job with a training opportunity'.



Any new candidate in the health sector should see their apprenticeship as a starting point of an overall positive career 'road map'. Their apprenticeship will be the key catalyst in the development of their working- life chances, enabling them to access the latest skills, develop and enhance their career opportunities.

With this in mind, further information and key messages can be found at: www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/apprenticeships in the 'related documents' section.

Apprenticeships around the Regions



Hertfordshire Health Apprenticeships

West Hertfordshire NHS Trust (WHHT), Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) and NHS Hertfordshire including Hertfordshire Community Health Services (HCHS) are all keen to develop, promote and implement bespoke Apprenticeship programmes for NHS staff bands 1-3. The inspiration has been the best practice in Apprenticeships developed by Jacqui Attrill, Professional Development and Recruitment Nurse, East and North Hertfordshire NHS.

Following several initial meetings with the Pre Professional Leads it was determined that, whilst Hertfordshire was meeting its Apprenticeship targets, this was largely due to the success and quality of the programmes running at East and North Hertfordshire, which wasn't representative of the county as a whole. Since January therefore, we have urgently been developing and promoting suitable programmes throughout the other Trusts to support the steady growth of Apprenticeship numbers.

WHHT and HPFT continued to receive ongoing support and advice, but the priority area was identified as the PCTs with HCHS, as they had very few existing Apprenticeships or stand alone NVQs. This was due to a number of barriers facing staff undertaking the programme, which included:

- More remote geographical locations of services compared with the Acute Trusts – reducing the ability of staff to travel to delivery locations
- Staffing levels coupled with the fact that staff would need to be released for training, making staff managers reluctant to engage
- Lack of understanding of the benefits and rewards of developing more highly skilled and competent staff
- Little or no knowledge of the Apprenticeship content or process
- The belief in some cases that NVQs are the only route for band 1-3 development

Planning was undertaken in partnership with the Pre Professional Lead for HCHS to undertake visits to all the services, delivering presentations, talks and forums to all levels of staff. Marketing materials were developed, starting with a comprehensive guide to Apprenticeships for any manager who required information. Posters, information leaflets and take away cards were designed and printed for distribution to staff at all levels.

Inter-organisation has been invaluable and feedback has shown too, that the printed information has had a significant impact on staff being interested and informed of the programmes available to them, and the ability of managers to promote Apprenticeships to their staff.

Investigation of potential providers was a large part of ensuring a quality programme was developed, with UH Ventures (a subsidiary business of the University of Hertfordshire and an existing provider of NVQs for HCHS and WHHT) appointed. We have agreed a specifically designed programme that has met specific needs we have identified.

As a result of these combination of activities a cohort of candidates from across HSHS will soon be commencing the first programme of level 3 Health Apprenticeship. Clinical Healthcare Skills numbers will total a minimum of 10 with an expectation that this will be approximately eventually reach 15-20. Places have been offered to WHHT and HPFT. WHHT will be utilising the programme for level 3 perioperative awards for general and maternity theatre staff.

Angela Wheeler, Hertfordshire Apprenticeship Lead

North East use Apprenticeships to support recruitment and development of Clinical Coders

The NHS nationally struggles to recruit to Clinical Coding Positions. At one stage the Trust had four vacant clinical coder positions and to support the recruitment process of these staff we developed an apprenticeship programme which incorporated the Business Admin Apprenticeship framework, a 12-week medical terminology course and 28 day clinical coders' course. The Trust recruited two apprentices as Coders and both were offered permanent employment as Clinical Coders whilst undertaking their apprenticeships. There has been a demonstrable reduction in the number of coding errors within the organisation which increases income generation.

Claudia.Godfrey South Tees NHS Trust





You're hired!

TV star joins NHS Yorkshire and the Humber to celebrate real life Apprentices

Claire Young, Star of TV's *The Apprentice* joined NHS Yorkshire and the Humber for the first NHS Celebration Event for Apprentices in September.

The purpose of the event was to share successes and recognise the achievements and commitment of everyone who has been involved in the development of NHS Apprenticeships in the Humber region.

"This year has seen the number of NHS apprentices in Yorkshire and Humber quadruple" says Alison Ackew, Apprenticeship Lead. "I am pleased that we have been able to hold this event as it provided us with an opportunity to raise the profile of NHS Apprenticeships" A number of Apprentices

and their families attended the event, and key partners and Stakeholders gave their support to the event including colleagues from Further Education and Higher Education providers, Job Centre Plus, Skills for Health and the National Apprenticeship Service.

Nick Wilson, Director of the National Apprenticeship Service said: "We have worked with the NHS Yorkshire and the Humber for over four years. The commitment and dedication shown to Apprenticeships over the last twelve months must be commended".

The winners were: Callum Anderson, NHS Rotherham (Young Apprentice of the Year), Stephen Cooper, Barnsley PCT

(Adult Apprentice of the Year), Antonia Allison, North Lincolnshire PCT (Advanced Apprentice of the Year), Jeanette Domokos, Leeds Teaching Hospital (Supportive Mentor/Buddy of the Year), Calderdale & Partners (Partnership of the Year), Karen Dickinson, Sheffield Health and Social Care (Champion of the Year).

The keynote speaker for the evening was event NHS Yorkshire and the Humber Chief Executive, Bill McCarthy. After the event he said: "...there is a lot of really impressive work going on to ensure that young people and indeed existing staff have the opportunity to improve their skills and their prospects by taking part in the health apprenticeships schemes in Yorkshire and the Humber".

Guide to Additional Components within the new SASE Frameworks

The Skills for Health Apprenticeship Team has provided the following guide on some of the additional components to the Knowledge and Competence qualifications, required within the new Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) frameworks

Functional Skills: the basics

Functional skills are practical skills in English, mathematics and ICT that allow individuals to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and in work. Functional Skills will replace the Key Skills of communication, application of number and ICT in Apprenticeship frameworks.

Functional Skills in Apprenticeships give learners the opportunity to develop, practice and apply skills in meaningful workplace contexts, thereby improving their employability and career opportunities. They will also help meet the needs of business for an increasingly skilled workforce.

Functional Skills: The business case

Functional skills are relevant to all jobs and industries. They run alongside the specific skills of the job and make people more effective, all-round employees. They help businesses become more efficient and competitive.

- **Functional English:** apprentices will be able to communicate more effectively

and accurately (both verbally and in writing) with colleagues and customers. They will be able to ask the right questions, and get the right messages across.

- **Functional Mathematics:** apprentices will be able to use mathematics in practical situations that are relevant for work. They will have the skills to tackle tasks such as measuring fluid input and output, measuring quantities e.g. for preparations of solutions or nutritional products or where appropriate administration of medicines.
- **Functional ICT:** apprentices will be able to find information on the internet or a database, send emails, enter information onto a computer, and present information using word-processing or graphics programs. They will be able to keep pace with changes in technology.

The Functional Skills standards (QCA/07/3472) describe the functional skills **from Entry 1 to Level 2**. There are also clear links between the functional and current Key Skills at levels 1 and 2, however, there are also some important differences. You need to examine the detail of the Functional Skills Standards to identify these differences. For example:

- In **Functional English** learners need to 'take a range of roles' during discussions and help move the discussions forward 'to

reach decisions' (Speaking and listening, Level 2). 'Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias' (Reading, Level 2), 'take appropriate action' as a result of reading the text (Reading, Level 1) and produce 'a wide range of documents on paper and on screen' (Writing, Level 2).

- In **Functional Mathematics** it is essential to focus on helping learners to become functional in their mathematics, rather than just helping them develop specific mathematical techniques. In particular, there is an emphasis on the process skills of representing, analysing and interpreting, and on adopting a problem-solving approach.
- In **Functional ICT** there is a similar emphasis on using ICT for a purpose – selecting and combining ICT skills and techniques and applying them to a wide range of practical tasks. A key implication of this is that ICT skills should be learned alongside other skills.

Functional Skills: Assessment

The summative assessment of functional skills will differ from current assessment arrangements for key skills. Instead of a portfolio for summative assessment, the assessments will be externally set and marked to measure application of skills for a purpose in a 'real-life' context. These assessments must be in a 'controlled environment' and will be one sitting per

Apprenticeship success – working with the Prince’s Trust:

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

Jacqui Atrill, Professional Development Recruitment Nurse, explains the culture shift that’s made apprenticeships there a success.

In May 2009 we were approached by the Prince’s Trust to offer work experience to young people not in employment, education or training.

Apprenticeship creation was high on our organisational agendas, so as well as offering work experience posts for Clinical Support Workers (CSWs) we also offered successful candidates the chance to move onto a one year contract as a Level 2 Apprentice.

We signed the Skills Pledge to enable all apprentices at Levels one to four 1-4 eligible for funding through the Joint Investment Framework to gain a minimum qualification of a level 2 NVQ relevant to their job role.

We’ve achieved interest in the scheme by advertising all new CSW posts as Apprenticeships as well as looking at ways of making sure all our staff received relevant training.

Apprenticeships are available within our Trust for Level 2 Health and Social Care, Level 2 Preoperative, Level 3 in Health, Health Maternity Support, Health Paediatric Support, Health Renal, Customer Care at Level 2 and 3 and Business and Administration at Level 2 and 3.

It is hoped that all the 15 successful candidates from the first wave of Apprentices will further progress onto advanced Apprenticeships, while three of these candidates are commencing the higher award this September – one of whom is a candidate from the Prince’s Trust.

By working with the Prince’s Trust, we have been able to reach into our local community and find the best possible apprenticeship candidates.

With a total of 210 Apprentices joining us since August 2009, and further progression available onto Foundation Degrees, is this not the obvious future of our workforce?

functional skills ranging from 1 to 3 hours. Further resources available from <http://www.fssupport.org/resources>

Employee Rights and Responsibilities

Learners must know and evidence the following:

- Knows and understands the range of employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities under Employment Law and that employment rights can be affected by other legislation as well. This should cover the apprentice’s rights and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act, other relevant equalities legislation and Health & Safety, together with the responsibilities and duties of employers;
- Knows and understands the procedures and documentation in their organisation which recognise and protect their relationship with their employer. Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity training must be an integral part of the apprentice’s learning programme;
- Knows and understands the range of sources of information and advice available to them on their employment rights and responsibilities. Details of Access to Work and Additional Learning Support must be included in the programme;
- Understands the role played by their occupation within their organisation and the health sector;

- Has an informed view of the types of career pathways that are open to them;
- Knows the types of representative bodies and understands their relevance to the health sector and organisation, and their main roles and responsibilities
- Knows where and how to get information and advice on the health sector, occupation, training and career
- Can describe and work within their organisation’s principles and codes of practice
- Recognises and can form a view on issues of public concern that affect their organisation and the health sector

Personal Learning and Thinking (PLT) Skills

The six PLTS and their outcomes must be evidenced and internally assessed showing:

- Independent enquiry – apprentices can process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.
- Creative thinking – apprentices think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections.

They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

- Reflective learning – apprentices evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.
- Team working – apprentices work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.



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Coming up next issue

- New SASE Apprenticeships announced
- How your Trade Union is supporting apprenticeships
- Emerging arrangements for delivery of Apprenticeships

Get in Touch

If you have an item for a future issue or you'd like to tell us what you think of our newsletter please get in touch.

Email sue.grattan@skillsforhealth.org.uk

News in brief

Worcestershire source apprenticeship award final place

Congratulations to Worcestershire NHS for reaching the finals of the Hereford and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce Business Awards for 'Apprenticeship Employer of the year' and for successfully recruiting their third cohort of apprentices. Find out about their stories at: <http://www.worcestershire.nhs.uk/work-for-us/apprenticeship-scheme.aspx>

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital gives birth to third generation of maternity support worker apprentices

Congratulations to the team recruiting their third cohort of apprentices who are undertaking the Maternity/Paediatric Support pathway within the level 3 NVQ of the Advanced Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care.

About Skills for Health

Skills for Health (SfH), is the employer-led Sector Skills Council for the health sector, serving the NHS, independent and voluntary sectors (2.1 million employees throughout the UK). SfH was relicensed in 2009 with an 'outstanding' contribution to workforce redesign. We are the authoritative voice on skills issues for the health sector and offer employers proven workforce solutions and tools – with the expertise and experience to use them effectively.

To sign up for our quarterly newsletter and our monthly Skills & Workforce Digest, please visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/newslettersignup

Please browse our website www.skillsforhealth.org.uk to access our online resources and find out how SfH can help you to develop a skilled, flexible and productive workforce.



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