

College in Northern Ireland gains Skills for Health Quality Mark

North West Regional College in Northern Ireland has become one of the first organisations to attain the Skills for Health Quality Mark, which is delivered through the National Skills Academy for Health.

The college offers further and higher education to approximately 22,000 students; its School of Health and Social Care trains about 3,000 students each year.

The challenge

The college wanted to gain the Skills for Health Quality Mark for its Level 2 and 3 programmes – Apprenticeship in Health and Social Care and Diploma in Health and Social Care. Both programmes have a focus on work-based learning and the college maintains close relationships with local employers in order to understand their needs and deliver the training that their businesses require from their workforce.



“The Quality Mark awarded to NWRC for these programmes illustrates just how good this College is in working in partnership with industry, and in delivering courses that make sense to the employers.”

Suzi Gray
National Portfolio Adviser at City & Guilds

The Skills for Health Quality Mark – the first for the UK’s health sector – provides a framework that defines and endorses high standards of learning and training, enabling healthcare employers to benefit from a world-class workforce.

How they did it

The requirements for gaining the Skills for Health Quality Mark are rigorous and thorough. The assessment process focuses on current best practice, and includes on-site visits, interviews with trainers, students and employers, teaching observations and evaluation of documentary evidence.

Skills for Health's assessors worked closely with the Health and Social Care team, supporting them through the assessment process and aiming to make the experience as positive as possible for the college.

The college worked with local employers to help them understand what the Quality Mark was and to ensure that they matched their training to employers' needs.

The outcomes

- The college achieved the Skills for Health Quality Mark for both programmes, in recognition of the high quality of training and education they provide and their efforts in working to provide training that is matched to employer needs.
- The college believes the Quality Mark benefits the health sector by providing a better more highly skilled workforce which is valued by employers.
- It also recognises the Quality Mark as a positive step forward for education and training in the health sector, by helping to professionalise the role of Carers and Health Care Support Workers and ultimately to improve the quality of care for patients.
- Local employers have been very supportive of the College attaining the Quality Mark; they understand how it underpins high quality care and best practice.
- The North West Regional College has now applied to have Quality Mark accreditation extended to all of its health sector education and training.



“This accolade recognises the calibre of our team and their commitment to deliver the highest quality training, in collaboration with employers. Our highly qualified lecturers bring their extensive range of Nursing and Social Work experience to meet the training needs of industry. This accolade recognises the learning excellence, the ethos of our team and our commitment to deliver the highest quality training, through innovative engagement with private, statutory, voluntary and community-based Health and Social Care Organisations.”

Helena McVeigh
Curriculum Manager for Work Based Learning, North West Regional College's School of Health & Social Care



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