

Deafblind Studies

Deafblind Studies is an innovative and co-operative project jointly developed and managed by a consortium of UK charities. This consortium is currently comprised of Deafblind UK, Deafblind Scotland, Sense, Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP), Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB), Sense Scotland and RNIB Scotland.

Each of the partner organisations is a major player in the field of sensory disability with a history of providing quality services. Across the organisations, such services include training, residential homes, day services and support networks with one of the partners being a recognised qualification awarding body by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

The Consortium organisations are represented by a nominated member of staff with acknowledged expertise within the field of sensory impairment and the managerial experience necessary to undertake their duties. These nominated persons together form the 'Board of Partners', the group responsible for the development, management and implementation of the project.

The Qualification(s)/Learning Programme(s)

The project was originally conceived approximately ten years ago. The field of deafblindness held a wealth of skill and experience that had never before been captured or translated into a form which could be formally taught to others across the range of congenital and acquired deafblindness, from birth to adulthood.

Over the five year period from conception, through the development of course content and material



design, this partnership received no specific funding and much has been achieved through the goodwill and extra work of staff within the partner organisations.

The last three years have seen the delivery of a successful pilot and subsequent completion of the first year of study for the second group of students (with one year yet to complete).

The project is different from any other piece of work being developed by any of the organisations involved, and has been managed without detriment to the core work and existing obligations of any of those organisations.



ORGANISATION
Deafblind Studies

QUALIFICATION /LEARNING PROGRAMME
Certificate in Deafblind Studies
Diploma in Deafblind Studies
Practice Unit

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Reasons for submitting qualification/ learning programme for Credit Rating and Levelling

- ◆ The development of this qualification came about because deafblind people across the UK were continually facing the difficulties associated with non-specialists attempting to assess for and deliver specialist services.
- ◆ One of the original aims of the partnership was to develop a qualification which has a recognisable academic value across the UK.
- ◆ Having achieved academic validation with an English University, it became apparent that the differences in the two qualifications frameworks at undergraduate level (across the country) resulted in the qualification not having a recognisable value within Scotland.
- ◆ The phased registration of social care sector workers in Scotland means that workers will have to hold, or be working towards achieving, qualifications that have gained Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) approval and recognition of suitability in relation to particular job types and functions. In order to achieve this they must have credit values which are recognisable within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

Benefits

- ◆ Credit Rating and Levelling allows the Board of Partners to submit applications to have the qualifications recognised as suitable for certain job roles within the phased registration process, thus ensuring that people who are deafblind are more likely to receive services from people who have the knowledge and skills needed to make such provision.

- ◆ Experienced workers in the field of deafblindness can now seek direct recognition of both their work and their skills through continued professional development. In addition, they have the potential to undertake an academic course of study which directly parallels their chosen career path.
- ◆ We believe also that this qualification is relevant also for workers supporting people with multiple disabilities. If it is placed on the SSSC list of relevant qualifications, it has wide significance in Scotland and would be attractive to a greater number of people.
- ◆ Lastly, the award holds the rather unique position of offering qualification holders access to undergraduate study which is recognised across the UK.

OUTCOME	SCQF LEVEL	SCQF CREDIT POINTS
UNIT		
Dual Sensory Impairment 1	7	20
Communication 1	7	20
Movement, Mobility and Orientation 1	7	10
Professional Practice 1	7	10
Dual Sensory Impairment 2	8	20
Communication 2	8	20
Movement, Mobility and Orientation 2	8	10
The Practice Unit	7	36



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