



Group Award Specification for:

NPA Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Qualification structure.....	2
	2.1 Structure.....	2
3	Aims of the qualification	3
	3.1 General aims of the qualification	3
	3.2 Specific aims of the qualification.....	3
4	Recommended entry to the qualification.....	4
	4.1 Core Skills entry profile.....	4
5	Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs	5
	5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units	6
	5.2 Signposting of National Occupational Standards (NOS) Social Services and Healthcare.....	7
	5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification(s)	8
	5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification(s)	9
6	Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment.....	17
	6.1 Sequencing/integration of Units.....	18
	6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning	18
	6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment.....	20
	6.4 Support materials	20
	6.5 Resource requirements	20
7	General information for centres	21
8	Glossary of terms	22
9	General information for learners.....	24

1 Introduction

This document was previously known as the Arrangements document. The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ assist centres to implement, deliver and manage the qualification.
- ◆ provide a guide for new staff involved in offering the qualification.
- ◆ inform course managers teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and HEIs of the aims and purpose of the qualification.
- ◆ provide details of the range of learners the qualification is suitable for and progression opportunities.

The National Progression Award (NPA) in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6 is a stand-alone Qualification and is also a requirement of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare. If candidates are undertaking this NPA as part of the Foundation Apprenticeship, they will also be required to complete the four mandatory Units of the SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare (SCQF level 6). The NPA provides the underpinning knowledge to the mandatory Units of the SVQ 2. The NPA Social Services and Healthcare and the SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare (both at SCQF level 6) are based on the National Occupational Standards revised in 2013.

This NPA comprises a blend of learning, assessment and practice based experience: introducing key learning themes that can be a basis for future development, as well as contributing towards the achievement of SVQ 2 in Social Services and Healthcare (the benchmark qualification for registration with SSSC as a support worker). The NPA and Foundation Apprenticeship have been created in response to a recognised shortfall in structured pathways inclusive of; practice experience, relevant learning and entry level qualifications which are available to young people (and other learners) and can lead to careers in social services, or progression to further learning. Undertaking the NPA is a first step along such a pathway, and can help facilitate informed choices about career and learning options.

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare opens several pathways for learners in S5 and S6. It gives the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge to enter a career in adult social services and to work towards the SVQ 2. By enabling learners to gain the mandatory Units of SVQ level 2 it leaves them with only two SVQ option Units to complete to gain their SVQ 2 in Social Services and Healthcare when they start their employment.

The Foundation Apprenticeship can also provide a stepping stone to achieving a Modern Apprenticeship in SVQ3 (SCQF level 7) Social Services and Healthcare and employment at practitioner level in adult services. SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare is the benchmark qualification for registration with the SSSC as a practitioner in adult services.

Three of the four SVQ 2 mandatory Units are also shared by the SVQ 2 Social Services (Children and Young People). If learners choose to enter social services as day care of children workers they will have considerable transferable skills and knowledge to support this transition.

Learners gaining the NPA Social Services and Healthcare without completing the full Foundation Apprenticeship would be able to start the SVQ 2 when they gained employment, if they wished to do so.

Learners who choose to enter further or higher education on leaving school with the Foundation Apprenticeship may follow other pathways into the social services workforce such as completing the HNC in Social Services in College or a Degree in Social Work at University.

The NPA will also be suitable for staff induction to employment in the range of adult social services. The NPA Units will be available as stand-alone Units and may be used as part of a skills set to support professional development.

The skills learners will develop through working on the NPA are likely to be useful in a range of employment and educational contexts, and are consistent with the four capacities outlined in the Curriculum for Excellence, which are to enable each candidate to be:

- ◆ a successful learner.
- ◆ a confident individual.
- ◆ a responsible citizen.
- ◆ an effective contributor.

Learners who complete the NPA will develop transferable values, knowledge, and skills which could contribute to careers in social services and other professions. For example, they will gain experience in relation to:

- ◆ interpersonal communication.
- ◆ information presentation, on line research and information technology.
- ◆ thinking about the needs of self and others, and team work.
- ◆ review, analysis and evaluation.

Workplace Practice is of primary importance for the achievement of awards for working in social services. Delivery and assessment of the NPA in Social Services and Healthcare will be a blended approach between school/college/training provider and practice in placement. The SVQ component of the Foundation Apprenticeship will be delivered and assessed in the workplace.

2 Qualification structure

The NPA in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6 contains the equivalent of four SQA Unit credits with an overall total of 24 SCQF credit points. The Units making up the NPA have been designed and developed for this award and all of the Units are mandatory.

A mapping of Core Skills development opportunities is available in Section 5.3.

2.1 Structure

In order to achieve the full NPA, learners must undertake the five mandatory Units comprising three SQA Units of 1.0 credit and two of 0.5 credits at SCQF level 6 as detailed below:

Mandatory Units

4 code	2 code	Unit Title	SCQF level	SCQF credit points	SQA credit
HD6J	46	Social Services in Scotland	6	6	1
HD6T	46	Communication in Care Relationships	6	6	1
HD6V	46	Safeguarding People	6	6	1
HD6W	46	Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services	6	3	0.5
HD6X	46	Human Development and Social Influences	6	3	0.5

There are no Optional Units

3 Aims of the qualification

The NPA Social Services and Healthcare will provide the opportunity for candidates to develop the skills, knowledge and values that will allow them to enter a career within adult social services. It will also allow them to work towards the SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare (SCQF level 6) which meets the registration criteria of the SSSC. This can be done as part of the Foundation Apprenticeship programme in S5/S6 or can be a stand-alone award for individuals working with the care sector.

3.1 General aims of the qualification

The general aims that are applicable to this NPA are the development of:

- ◆ Transferable skills (including Core Skills)
- ◆ Personal effectiveness
- ◆ Problem solving skills
- ◆ Skills for working with others (including team work)
- ◆ Communications skills
- ◆ Skills and knowledge to enable progression within the SCQF structure (including progression to further and higher education)
- ◆ Skills and opportunities for career planning and enhancement of employment prospects

3.2 Specific aims of the qualification

The specific aim of this NPA is to provide the values, skills and knowledge necessary to prepare learners to achieve the mandatory Units for SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare, and enter employment in a range of adult social services settings. It aims to provide a blended learning experience inclusive of classroom learning, assessment and practice based experience which will be particularly beneficial for young people who might wish to progress to the full Foundation Apprenticeship, and also have a more general application for learners entering employment in social services settings who require to develop and consolidate their knowledge and skills in a structured manner.

The specific aims of this NPA are to:

- 1 Enable candidates to develop their understanding of the values which underpin work in social service settings.
- 2 Enable candidates to understand how the National Care Standards and the SSSC Codes of Practice should inform social services practice.
- 3 Enable candidates to develop their understanding of current law, policy, procedures and good practice.
- 4 Enable candidates to begin to integrate values, skills and knowledge through learning and practice experience in adult social services settings.
- 5 Enable candidates to begin to develop skills appropriate for working with individuals who have different needs and who use social services.
- 6 Provide candidates with opportunities to gain and demonstrate skills necessary for safe care.
- 7 Introduce candidates to the body of knowledge that underpins social services practice
- 8 Enable candidates to be reflective practitioners and evaluate their practice.
- 9 Support candidates in preparing for employment in social services settings, and support those who are already in employment to develop their skills.
- 10 Facilitate progression within the Foundation Apprenticeship, Modern Apprenticeship, Further or Higher Education (for those who wish).

4 Recommended entry to the qualification

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. This NPA is suitable for learners who have not previously studied aspects of social services or had practical experience in this sector, as well as those who have already gained some experience. Learners may benefit from previous relevant learning such as National 5 or an equivalent level.

It is recognised that a range of formal and informal prior learning may be relevant, such as:

- ◆ opportunities to carry out research and develop a useful background knowledge base
- ◆ opportunities to think about the needs of self and others
- ◆ skills in review, analysis and evaluation

4.1 Core Skills entry profile

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills in the Units contained within the NPA.

The Core Skills entry profile provides a summary of the associated assessment activities that exemplify why a particular level has been recommended for this qualification. The information should be used to identify if additional learning support needs to be put in place for learners whose Core Skills profile is below the recommended entry level or whether learners should be encouraged to do an alternative level or learning programme.

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
<i>Communication</i>	5	Case studies, presentations, blogs, posters, practical activities
<i>Numeracy</i>	5	Case studies, presentations, blogs, posters, practical activities
<i>Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</i>	5	Case studies, presentations, blogs, posters, practical activities

Core Skill	Recommended SCQF entry profile	Associated assessment activities
<i>Problem Solving</i>	5	Case studies, presentations, blogs, posters, practical activities
<i>Working with Others</i>	5	Case studies, presentations, blogs, posters, practical activities

Please note that as communication is an essential skill in all aspects of work in social services it may be advisable to provide additional support to some learners if they do not have the recommended level 5 Core Skill *Communication*.

5 Additional benefits of the qualification in meeting employer needs

This qualification has been designed to meet a specific purpose and what follows are details on how that purpose has been met through mapping of the Units to the aims of the qualification. Through meeting the aims, additional value has been achieved by linking the Unit standards with those defined in National Occupational Standards and/or trade/professional body requirements. In addition, significant opportunities exist for learners to develop the more generic skill, known as Core Skills through doing this qualification.

5.1 Mapping of qualification aims to Units

Code	Unit title	Specific Aims of the NPA Social Services and Healthcare (section 3.2)									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
HD6J 46	Social Services in Scotland	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
HD6T 46	Communication in Care Relationships	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
HD6V 46	Safeguarding People	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HD6W 46	Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HD6X 46	Human Development and Social Influences		X		X	X		X	X	X	X

5.2 Signposting of National Occupational Standards (NOS) Social Services and Healthcare

Code	Unit Title	National Occupational Standard										
HD6J 46	Social Services in Scotland	SCDHSC0021 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0022 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0023 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0024 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0025 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0210 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0233 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0234 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0241 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0242 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0246 underpinning knowledge
HD6T 46	Communication in Care Relationships	SCDHSC0021 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0022 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0023 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0024 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0025 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0210 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0233 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0234 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0241 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0242 underpinning knowledge	
HD6V 46	Safeguarding People	SCDHSC0021 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0022 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0023 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0024 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0027 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0233 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0234 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0241 underpinning knowledge			
HD6W 46	Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services	SCDHSC0021 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0022 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0023 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0024 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0025 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0210 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0233 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0234 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0243 underpinning knowledge		
HD6X 46	Human Development and Social Influences	SCDHSC0021 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0022 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0023 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0024 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0025 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0210 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0233 underpinning knowledge	SCDHSC0234 underpinning knowledge			

5.3 Mapping of Core Skills development opportunities across the qualification(s)

Unit code	Unit title	Communication		Numeracy		ICT		Problem Solving			Working with Others	
		Written	Oral	Using Number	Using Graphical Information	Accessing Information	Providing/Creating Information	Critical Thinking	Planning and Organising	Reviewing and Evaluating	Working Co-operatively with Others	Reviewing Co-operative Contribution
HD6J 46	Social Services in Scotland	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HD6T 46	Communication in Care Relationships	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HD6V 46	Safeguarding People	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HD6W 46	Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HD6X 46	Human Development and Social Influences	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.4 Assessment Strategy for the qualification(s)

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Social Services in Scotland	<p>In this Outcome, candidates will investigate social services provision for adults. An appropriate instrument of assessment for this Outcome may be a candidate folio.</p> <p>Candidates will be given a brief for the investigation informing them that the evidence for the folio must cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explanation of three ways in which services are provided ◆ description of one type of provision for each of three people who use services ◆ explanation of why users of services identified above may need these types of provision ◆ two responsibilities of Health and Social Care Partnerships 	<p>An appropriate instrument of assessment for Outcome 2 may be candidate delivered presentations which could be undertaken as group work or individually. Candidates will be provided with a brief for their investigation, and it is recommended that a range of different topics be allocated to small groups or individual candidates.</p> <p>The brief will inform candidates that the evidence they provide must cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ four of the six principles that underpin the National Care Standards. ◆ one way in which each of the identified principles can be applied to the National Care Standards. 	<p>An appropriate instrument of assessment for Outcome 3 may be a folio of evidence which includes a candidate learning log. Candidates will investigate reflection as a learning and development tool.</p> <p>Candidates will be given a brief for the investigation informing them that the evidence for the learning log must cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ one model of the reflective cycle. ◆ one explanation of reflective skills. ◆ one example of the candidates own learning using the reflective cycle. 	N/A

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Social Services in Scotland (cont)	<p>The ways in which services are provided will be chosen from the range below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Statutory sector ◆ Voluntary sector ◆ Independent provision ◆ Families and informal carers <p>The types of provision will be chosen from the range below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Day care services ◆ Care at home ◆ Residential care ◆ Supported accommodation <p>People who use services will be chosen from the range below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Older adults ◆ People who have learning difficulties ◆ People who have physical disabilities ◆ People who have mental health conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ three responsibilities of social services employers in relation to the SSSC Codes of Practice. ◆ three responsibilities of social services employees in relation to the SSSC Codes of Practice. ◆ four values that social services workers should possess. ◆ an explanation of what professional boundaries are, and the differences between professional and personal life. 		

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Social Services in Scotland (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ People who misuse substances ◆ People who are homeless 			
Communication in Care Relationships	<p>Appropriate methods of assessment for Outcome 1 may include presentations with notes, PowerPoint, posters or the use of blogs.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 1 candidates must provide evidence which shows that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain the importance of clear communication with individuals in a social services setting. ◆ investigate four different communication methods. ◆ identify when and how to seek advice from others. 	<p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 2 may be a practical activity based on at least two case studies, contextualised to social services settings.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 2 candidates must provide evidence to show that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identify three barriers to communication including physiological, cultural and environmental barriers. ◆ describe one way to use active listening and one way to use body language when communicating with people in a social services setting. ◆ identify two factors that can have a positive or negative effect on the way people communicate. 	<p>Appropriate methods of assessment for Outcome 3 may include presentations with notes, PowerPoint, posters or the use of blogs.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 3 candidates must provide evidence which shows that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identify two ways that promote active participation when supporting the individual to communicate. ◆ explain the meaning of person-centered working and the importance of individuals' cultural and language context. ◆ explain one way to support the needs of the individual to be able to communicate their views, wishes and preferences. 	<p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 4 may be the use of structured questions, based around case studies which are contextualised to a social service setting.</p> <p>Evidence for Outcome 4 will be gathered under supervision at appropriate points in the Unit.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 4 candidates must provide evidence which shows that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain three reasons why employees should maintain confidentiality in a social services setting. ◆ explain four ways in which to deal with messages and information in a social services setting.

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Communication in Care Relationships (cont)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain two ways how to adapt the way you communicate to reduce barriers to communication. ◆ explain two ways to give constructive feedback and encouragement to individuals within a social services setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain why it is important to give individuals enough time to communicate and to check that you and the individual have understood each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain three reasons why employers should maintain confidentiality in a social services setting.
Safeguarding People	<p>An appropriate method of gathering evidence for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 may be through the use of case study material and structured questions. There must be a record of all evidence gathered, including any evidence that is gathered verbally.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 1 candidates must produce evidence to show that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain three kinds of safeguarding needs adults might experience. 	<p>An appropriate method of gathering evidence for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 may be through the use of case study material and structured questions. There must be a record of all evidence gathered, including any evidence that is gathered verbally.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 2 candidates must produce evidence to show that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identify three key points of safeguarding law that relate to social services settings. 	<p>An appropriate method of gathering evidence for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 may be through the use of case study material and structured questions. There must be a record of all evidence gathered, including any evidence that is gathered verbally.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 3 candidates must produce evidence to show that they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain three ways in which social services values can help reduce the need for safeguarding interventions. 	N/A

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 1	Outcome 4
Safeguarding People (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ describe four signs and symptoms that may indicate an individual requires to be safeguarded. ◆ describe three factors that can make some adults more likely to need safeguarding. ◆ identify what grooming means and the common features of perpetrator behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ provide an explanation of what should be done and who should be informed when there are concerns about safeguarding, poor or discriminatory practices; together with the way duty of care overrides confidentiality in these circumstances (to include awareness of the need to report concerns and who they should be reported to). ◆ describe three appropriate ways to respond to someone who discloses that they are at risk, or are in need of safeguarding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain three steps you can take to safeguard yourself and others, when working in a social services setting. ◆ describe three ways working in a person centered manner can help reduce the need for safeguarding interventions. ◆ describe two ways in which partnership working, and appropriate information sharing, can help reduce the need for safeguarding interventions. 	
Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services	<p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 1 may be gathering evidence in a candidate folio.</p> <p>Candidates will be given a brief for their investigation informing them evidence must cover:</p>	<p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 2 may be the use of structured questions.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 2 candidates must provide evidence to show that they can:</p>	<p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcome 3 may be the use of structured questions.</p> <p>To achieve Outcome 3 candidates must provide evidence which shows that they can:</p>	

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ two risks to personal safety. ◆ two steps you can take to keep yourself physically safe in a social services setting. ◆ two risks to the safety of people who use services. ◆ two steps you can take to ensure the safety of people who use services. ◆ two risks to environmental safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain two ways in which the Duty of Care in social services contributes to safe practice. ◆ explain two ways in which the SSSC Codes of Practice contribute to safe practice. ◆ identify three health and safety responsibilities of employees in the social services sector. ◆ identify four health and safety responsibilities of employers in the social services sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ explain the purpose of risk assessment. ◆ identify five steps in the risk assessment process. 	
Human Development and Social Influences	Written and/or oral evidence is required for all Outcomes and will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit. Evidence can be generated using a range of techniques. An assessor observation record must be used to support performance evidence.	Written and/or oral evidence is required for all Outcomes and will be gathered in open-book conditions at appropriate points throughout the Unit. Evidence can be generated using a range of techniques. An assessor observation record must be used to support performance evidence.		

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Human Development and Social Influences (cont)	<p>Outcomes 1 and 2</p> <p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 may be the use of structured questions and case studies.</p> <p>There must be a record of all evidence gathered, including any evidence that is gathered verbally.</p> <p>To achieve Outcomes 1 and 2, candidates must provide evidence that covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the main stages of human development. ◆ one theoretical model which describes human development and the application of this to the main stages of human development. ◆ two social influences that can impact on people's wellbeing and development. 	<p>Outcomes 1 and 2</p> <p>An appropriate method of assessment for Outcomes 1 and 2 may be the use of structured questions and case studies.</p> <p>There must be a record of all evidence gathered, including any evidence that is gathered verbally.</p> <p>To achieve Outcomes 1 and 2, candidates must provide evidence that covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the main stages of human development. ◆ one theoretical model which describes human development and the application of this to the main stages of human development. ◆ two social influences that can impact on people's wellbeing and development. 		

Unit	Assessment			
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
Human Development and Social Influences (cont)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ one relevant concept or theory to give insight into the ways in which social influences impact on people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ one relevant concept or theory to give insight into the ways in which social influences impact on people. 		

6 Guidance on approaches to delivery and assessment

A variety of approaches to delivery could be used, including:

- ◆ Case studies (verbal, written or audio visual)
- ◆ Group or individual project work
- ◆ Visual, power point, or other types of presentation
- ◆ Practical activities with scenarios contextualised to social services settings
- ◆ Group work and discussions
- ◆ Visiting speakers

Assessments must be carried out under supervision. Assessment methods should reflect delivery methods and could include:

- ◆ **Case studies** (electronic, verbal, written or audio visual, or online) with associated questioning of different types to draw out evidence of knowledge and understanding.
- ◆ **Group or individual projects** which may be presented on paper or electronically and are based on exploratory or investigative work. Where group projects are undertaken, individual candidate's evidence will be tracked and recorded by assessors.
- ◆ **Use of online resources/case studies, blogs.**
- ◆ **Posters or leaflets** which may be presented on paper or electronically and have been designed by individuals or groups which illustrate aspects of relevant learning.
- ◆ **Presentations** prepared and delivered by individuals or groups of candidates relevant to communication in care relationships. Evidence may be generated using a range of techniques such as: e-portfolio, presentation notes, posters, power points, blogs
Performance evidence will be based on observation of each individual's contribution, and in the case of group work, their ability to work co-operatively. An assessor observation record must be used to support the performance evidence.
- ◆ **Practical activities, electronic practice simulation** with scenarios contextualised to social service settings.

The assessment methods discussed for all Outcomes within individual Units are for guidance purposes, as other methods may prove better suited to candidates and the circumstances of assessment.

The principle of holistic assessment and learning is fundamental to all SQA awards. It is therefore recommended that centres consider opportunities for integration of learning and assessment. In particular, centres are encouraged to plan assessments across the Outcomes and Performance Criteria which make up specific Units, and where learners provide evidence for one Unit it should be considered that there may be links to other Units within the award. Similarly, practical activities undertaken while learners are on placement in social services settings could potentially provide evidence towards assessment. There could be a risk of over assessment if an integrated or holistic approach is not adopted.

There will be no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Candidates' additional needs will be taken into account when planning assessment and use of supportive technology will be permitted and encouraged where this is appropriate.

It should be noted that practice based learning is central to this NPA programme, and all learners require to spend time in social services settings in order to achieve the award.

Learners undertaking this NPA in S5/S6 as part of the Foundation Apprenticeship must experience half a day per week in a practice based setting, within term time. Other types of Learners must have an equivalent level of practice based experience. It is suggested that learners keep a reflective diary or learning log relating to their practice based learning, as this could helpfully promote their reflective learning and be useful for assessment purposes.

A portfolio of NPA evidence should be kept by learners to support progression to the full SVQ 2 award. Ideally the portfolio will be kept electronically.

The issues associated with plagiarism should be discussed with candidates. Some written work might be undertaken outside the centre but clear conditions will always be in place to ensure authenticity of evidence. Retention of preparatory or draft work, and any tracking records or e-mail exchanges between candidates and teachers/lecturers can help support quality assurance and the internal and external verification processes.

Centres are reminded that prior SQA verification of centre devised assessments will help ensure that the national standard is met. Also, where learners experience a range of assessment methods, it can help them to develop learning and presentation skills that could be transferrable to employment, further or higher education.

6.1 Sequencing/integration of Units

The NPA will generally be delivered within an academic year (or equivalent). While there is some flexibility over the order in which the NPA Units can be delivered, it is highly recommended that the Unit 'Social Services in Scotland' be delivered early in the programme, and ideally in the introductory phase; this Unit provides important contextual learning which is designed to be supportive of other Units. In particular this Unit introduces the range of social services available, social services values, the SSSC Codes of Practice, National Care Standards and guidance on thinking reflectively. These aspects of learning link to all other Units, and will provide a basis for further study.

6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning

SQA recognises that learners acquire knowledge and skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

In some instances, part of a Group Award may be achieved through the recognition of prior learning. However, it is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full Group Award, and in the instance of the NPA it is considered unlikely that this would be the case.

The recognition of prior learning may **not** be used as a method of assessing in the following types of Units and assessments:

- ◆ Certain types of assessment instruments where the standard may be compromised by not using the same assessment method outlined in the Unit
- ◆ Where there is an existing requirement for a licence to practice
- ◆ Where there are specific health and safety requirements
- ◆ Where there are regulatory, professional or other statutory requirements
- ◆ Where otherwise specified in an Assessment Strategy

More information and guidance on the *Recognition of Prior Learning* (RPL) may be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

The following sub-sections outline how existing SQA Unit(s) may contribute to this Group Award. Additionally, they also outline how this Group Award may be recognised for professional and articulation purposes.

6.2.1 Articulation and/or progression

The NPA in Social Services and Healthcare is one of two requirements for the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare. The other requirement comprises the four mandatory Units for SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare (both awards are at SCQF level 6).

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare opens several pathways for learners in S5 and S6, and other learners. For example:

- ◆ It provides an opportunity to develop the values, skills and knowledge necessary to enter a career in adult social services, and sound basis from which to work towards the above mentioned SVQ 2 award (which is the benchmark qualification for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) as a support worker in adult services).
- ◆ Because three of the four SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare mandatory Units are shared with SVQ 2 Social Services (Children and Young People) should learners choose to enter a support worker role in social services which provide for the care of children they would have valuable transferable values, skills and knowledge to support such a transition.
- ◆ It can be a stepping stone towards achieving a Modern Apprenticeship in Social Services and Health Care inclusive of an SVQ 2/3 award. Undertaking the SVQ 3 Modern Apprenticeship is a pathway to entry to employment at practitioner level in adult social services. SVQ 3 Social Services and Healthcare is the benchmark qualification for registration with the SSSC as a practitioner in adult social services.
- ◆ It will be suitable for purposes of staff induction to employment and preparation for assessment at SVQ 2 in Social Services and Healthcare within adult social services, and it should be noted that the NPA Units will be available on a stand-alone basis and could be used as part of a skills set for professional development.
- ◆ Learners who gain the NPA Social Services and Healthcare and do not complete the full Foundation Apprenticeship, could carry their learning forward and commence an SVQ 2 assessment should they later gain employment in adult social services.
- ◆ Learners who choose to enter further or higher education having completed the NPA and/or Foundation Apprenticeship may elect to follow other pathways into the social services workforce; such as an HNC in Social Services, or a Degree in Social Work.

6.2.2 Professional recognition

The NPA Social Services and Healthcare has been designed to assist learners towards gaining the underpinning knowledge they require to enter employment in social services for adults, and to prepare for assessment leading towards the award SVQ 2 in Social Services and Health Care (the benchmark qualification for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) as a support worker in adult services).

6.3 Opportunities for e-assessment

The preferred methods of assessment for the NPA include electronic assessment, as it is believed that this approach is most likely to engage candidates' enthusiasm. Assessment material can be presented electronically through centre devised methods; for example case study material could be provided electronically, and associated responses to questions can be gathered by the electronic means. Blogs and other methods of information transmission may also provide a suitable means of assessment.

Where electronic assessment is not possible, such as to meet the additional needs of candidates, alternative methods may be used (for example a paper based approach).

6.4 Support materials

Assessment Support Packs (ASPs) will be developed for all Units in the NPA. The ASPs can be located on the SQA Secure site.

6.5 Resource requirements

Centres should be equipped with the relevant equipment and resources enable delivery of learning, this will include:

- ◆ Suitably qualified and experienced staff
- ◆ Learning venues
- ◆ Learning plans
- ◆ Assessment materials
- ◆ Information technology
- ◆ Appropriate placement experience for learners

Centre staff who are involved in delivery of this NPA are required to have current knowledge and understanding of social services in Scotland. In addition they must be knowledgeable and experienced in relation to Unit contents, and have current and relevant evidence of CPD. They must also hold a qualification which is relevant to the areas of the award they will deliver, and which is at an equal SCQF level to the NPA or above (SCQF 6 or above).

In addition to the above, assessors and internal verifiers for the NPA are required to hold qualifications in line with the requirements for SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare. The current assessment strategy requires assessors and verifiers working within the social services sector to hold a registerable qualification for the area and level of practice to be assessed or verified; however, assessors and verifiers are not required to be registered with the SSSC. The SSSC website provides a list of registerable qualifications for each area of social services practice. Assessors and verifiers must hold (or be working towards) relevant Learning and Development qualifications.

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure staff involved in delivery of the NPA are suitably qualified, knowledgeable, and experienced in the areas of practice they are working with. Where staff (including assessor and verifiers) do not meet the above requirements, they must work towards achievement of a necessary qualification within a timescale of three years.

7 General information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The Unit specifications making up this Group Award have been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners will be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used within this/these qualification(s) should be internally verified, using the appropriate policy within the centre and the guidelines set by SQA.

External verification will be carried out by SQA to ensure that internal assessment is within the national guidelines for these qualifications.

Further information on internal and external verification can be found in *SQA's Guide to Assessment* (www.sqa.org.uk/GuideToAssessment).

8 Glossary of terms

Embedded Core Skills: is where the assessment evidence for the Unit also includes full evidence for complete Core Skill or Core Skill components. A learner successfully completing the Unit will be automatically certificated for the Core Skill. (This depends on the Unit having been successfully audited and validated for Core Skills certification.)

Finish date: The end of a Group Award's lapsing period is known as the finish date. After the finish date, the Group Award will no longer be live and the following applies:

- ◆ candidates may not be entered for the Group Award
- ◆ the Group Award will continue to exist only as an archive record on the Awards Processing System (APS)

Lapsing date: When a Group Award is entered into its lapsing period, the following will apply:

- ◆ The Group Award will be deleted from the relevant catalogue.
- ◆ The Group Award specification will remain until the qualification reaches its finish date at which point it will be removed from SQA's website and archived.
- ◆ No new centres may be approved to offer the Group Award.
- ◆ Centres should only enter candidates whom they expect to complete the Group Award during the defined lapsing period.

SQA credit value: The credit value allocated to a Unit gives an indication of the contribution the Unit makes to an SQA Group Award. An SQA credit value of 1 given to an SQA Unit represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: The Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing all relevant programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF visit the SCQF website at www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a means of describing and comparing the amount of learning that is required to complete a qualification at a given level of the Framework. One National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. One National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and one Higher National Unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: The level a qualification is assigned within the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. HNCs and HNDs are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8 respectively. Higher National Units will normally be at levels 6–9 and Graded Units will be at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2–6 and will normally be made up of National Units which are available from SCQF levels 2–7.

Subject Unit: Subject Units contain vocational/subject content and are designed to test a specific set of knowledge and skills.

Signposted Core Skills: refers to opportunities to develop Core Skills arise in learning and teaching but are not automatically certificated.

9 General information for learners

This section will help you decide whether this is the qualification for you by explaining what the qualification is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the qualification and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The NPA in Social Services and Healthcare is a qualification in its own right; it is also part of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare. The other part is made up of the four mandatory Units for the SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare. This NPA has been designed to help provide you with the learning you will need if you go on to complete the Foundation Apprenticeship by undertaking the SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare. It is suitable for you if you have not previously studied social services or had practical experience in this area, and if you have already gained some experience.

Both parts of the Foundation Apprenticeship (The NPA and the four SVQ Units) are at SCQF level 6, which is the same level as Highers. The NPA contains 24 SCQF Credit Points which, to allow for comparison, is the same amount as the Higher Care Qualification. If you completed the Foundation Apprenticeship by also undertaking the four SVQ Units, you would be awarded a further 37 SCQF Credit Points.

This NPA contains three full SQA Units, and two half SQA Units; you need to achieve all the Units to complete the award. The Units are as follows:

- 1 Social Services in Scotland (1 Unit)
- 2 Communication in Care Relationships (1 Unit)
- 3 Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services (0.5 Unit)
- 4 Safeguarding People (1 Unit)
- 5 Human Development and Social Influences (0.5 Unit)

There will be an assessment of your learning which could involve visual, electronic, verbal and written materials. The submission of these assessment items can help develop your inter-personal and communication skills.

This NPA can help open several pathways, such as:

- ◆ An opportunity for you to learn about careers in adult social services, and a good basis for you to work towards the above mentioned SVQ 2 award and Foundation Apprenticeship. SVQ 2 Social Services and Healthcare is the benchmark qualification for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) as a support worker in adult social services.
- ◆ You could use it as a basis to look for employment as a support worker in adult social services.
- ◆ If you are already in employment your employer may use it for induction purposes.
- ◆ If you choose to look for employment as a support worker role in social services for the care of children and young people, you would have valuable transferable learning to take with you.
- ◆ You could use it as a stepping stone towards a Modern Apprenticeship in Social Services and Health Care inclusive of an SVQ 3 award which would be at SCQF level 7 (or the same level as an HNC).
- ◆ If you complete the NPA and decide not go on to the full Foundation Apprenticeship, you could still carry your learning forward and commence an SVQ 2 assessment later
- ◆ If you decide to go on to college or university, the NPA or Foundation Apprenticeship could support you to follow other pathways into the social services workforce; such as an HNC in Social Services, or a Degree in Social Work.

- ◆ If you are already in employment, the NPA Units could be used as part of a skills set for professional development purposes.

The skills you will develop through working on this NPA are likely to be useful in any context and are consistent with the four capacities outlined in the Curriculum for Excellence, which are to enable each candidate to be:

- ◆ a successful learner.
- ◆ a confident individual.
- ◆ a responsible citizen.
- ◆ an effective contributor.