

Skills for Care & Development

Sgiliau Gofal a Datblygu

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STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SECTOR QUALIFICATIONS AND LEARNING

2017-2020

Purpose of the document

Skills for Care & Development (SfCD) is a partnership of four organisations:

- Northern Ireland Social Care Council
- Scottish Social Services Council
- Skills for Care (in England)
- *Social Care Wales*

This document sets out the principles that underpin SfCD's *Strategic Approach to Sector Qualifications and Learning (SASQL)*. The principles demonstrate how working as a partnership enhances the work of SfCD partners in creating a high quality and sustainable workforce for early years, children and young people's services, social work and social care for adults and children across the whole of the UK. The overall goal is to build a skilled, flexible workforce capable of working with individuals, their families and carers to co-develop solutions that build on people's strengths and maximise each person's wellbeing.

This SASQL stands in place of the earlier *Sector Qualifications and Learning Strategy*.

The primary audiences and purposes for the SASQL are:

- SfCD partners, as an internal agreement confirming shared professional understanding about principles that underpin work on learning and qualifications across the UK
- UK governments, to help demonstrate the benefits of working together as a UK partnership
- Awarding Organisations, HEIs, qualifications regulators and employers in the UK nations, as guidance on the shared principles that inform the work of SfCD partners on qualifications and learning

The SASQL is presented as a set of principles, firstly for learning and qualifications in the sector; and secondly for shared principles SfCD partners will observe when undertaking work on learning and qualifications across the UK.

1. Principles for learning and qualifications in the sector

Learning and qualifications for the sector should:

- a. Reflect the sector's primary and over-riding aim of enhancing the wellbeing of individuals (whether adults or children) and their carers
- b. Support the professionalization of the workforce
- c. Support new models of service delivery and new ways of working that cross traditional boundaries
- d. Support registration and regulation of the workforce where this is required
- e. Embed shared values for care and a common core of content as expressed primarily in NOS
- f. Be easy to understand by learners and employers
- g. Be of good quality, delivering value for money as well as the skills and knowledge needed for high quality services
- h. Be attractive to learners with varied learning preferences and different learning pathways
- i. Be culturally sensitive (including in Wales availability in the medium of Welsh)
- j. Make use of modern IT and mobile technologies
- k. Be portable between employers and, as far as possible, across borders within the UK
- l. Assess knowledge principally on the basis of impact on practice, and assess competence principally in the context of real practice, using

shared Assessment Principles where assessment occurs within qualifications

- m. Support the learning pathway from induction through to competence and on to continuing professional development
- n. Support progression to build flexible pathways for careers in care
- o. Recognise prior learning and achievement so as to avoid duplication of learning and assessment
- p. Enhance leadership qualities at every level and grow future leaders for the sector

2. Principles for partnership work for learning and qualifications

SfCD partners will follow these principles for their learning and qualifications work:

- a. Work with and inform UK governments and qualification regulators on the learning and qualifications required to create a high quality and sustainable workforce for the sector, in the context of rapidly increasing demand for services and continued funding pressures
- b. Take account of policy contexts for social care, early years and children and young people's services in each nation across the UK, identifying where these diverge and where they share common ground
- c. Share information about developments in learning and qualification across the UK, carrying out joint work where this enhances outcomes
- d. Work proactively with employers, qualification regulators, awarding organisations, HEIs, and other stakeholders to ensure effective and high quality qualifications are available to the sector
- e. Seek to improve approaches for evaluating the impact of learning and qualifications in the sector

- f. Recognise the range of ways learners may wish to access learning due to personal preferences, financial or time constraints, or levels of employer support
- g. Seek ways to maximise the portability of learning and qualifications within and across UK borders
- h. Drive up the quality of learning provision whether or not this leads to certification/qualification
- i. Support the development of new approaches to learning and assessment
- j. Enable employers and learners to identify high quality learning provision
- k. Support and seek to drive up learning, qualification achievement and progression, recognising the positive impact this has on recruitment and retention
- l. Support employers and learners to engage in high quality apprenticeships
- m. Support employers to build a learning culture in their service