



new learning disability qualifications for 2011

induction contextualised to job role and service

Workers new to social care and new to supporting people with a learning disability have to complete the refreshed common induction standards. Their employer needs to contextualise their induction learning to the needs of the people the worker supports, their job role and the service. For CQC regulated services this is in line with the Skills for Care advice available at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc.

health and social care diplomas

The Health and Social Care Diploma at levels 2 and 3 have replaced the previous Health and Social Care NVQ at levels 2 and 3 from January 2011. The diplomas are made up of nine mandatory units and a range of optional units. The mandatory units are very closely aligned to the learning covered by new workers in the common induction standards (CIS).

learning disability pathways to demonstrate competence

On completion of induction, workers in learning disability services can then take a specialist learning disability pathway through the Health and Social Care Diploma. The learning from their contextualised induction can then be assessed and accredited as part of the mandatory units. Learners can select from a number of optional units including both learning disability and generic units, picking those that are relevant to the needs and aspirations of the people they support and their job role. Combining the mandatory units with units from the learning disability pathway will enable learners to cover comparable knowledge from the Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ) together with additional knowledge and skills relating to supporting people with a learning disability. In addition the worker can have their competence assessed by this route.

what about the LDQ?

Since January 2011 the Learning Disability Qualification (LDQ) no longer exists in its current form. Workers who have already achieved the LDQ will continue to hold a valid and valued qualification. The same knowledge is assessed within the new qualifications in various units.

what about care quality commission regulations?

In addition to changes in the qualifications there are new requirements on Care Quality Commission (CQC) services in relation to the development of workers. This means that the National Minimum Standard requirements to offer the LDQ to new workers supporting people with a learning disability has been replaced by new regulator outcomes.

learning disability specific qualifications

Specific learning disability qualifications have also been developed at level 2 and 3 for continuing professional development (CPD):

- Level 2 Award in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Level 3 Award in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Level 2 Certificate in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Individuals with Learning Disabilities

The **certificates** provide the opportunity for contextualised CPD for workers with experience in social care to develop knowledge and skills around supporting individuals with a learning disability so that they can provide high quality person centred support. It is not intended that the certificates confirm competence in the social care role as this can only be truly achieved through the Health and Social Care Diplomas.

The smaller **awards** offer the opportunity of accredited learning in small chunks and have a variety of potential uses including:

- People whose job role is not exclusively focused around supporting individuals with learning disabilities, but who come into contact with people as part of their job, for example:
 - health
 - education
 - housing,
 - leisure
 - employment,
 - libraries
 - people working in probation
- Employment support workers, dementia care advisors and palliative care professionals could complete the award to enable them to better tailor their service to people's needs. Used in this context these qualifications would support the implementation of the current autism, dementia and end of life strategies for people with learning disabilities.
- Workers who are new to learning disability services but already know about social care.
- Workers in learning disability services wishing to undertake a shorter CPD qualification.
- People in community and volunteering roles who work alongside or support people with a learning disability who want more information so that they can do a good job.

A broad range of optional units have been identified to provide as much flexibility as possible for the learner to focus on the units that provide what they need to know and is relevant for their role. The certificates are now available and the awards will be available in early 2011.

For additional information:

- Details of the awarding organisations offering the qualifications is available at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf and click on new qualifications and units.
- Advice on meeting CQC guidelines www.skillsforcare.org.uk/cqc.
- How to tailor the new qualifications to learner's job roles www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qcf and click on supporting materials.