



**Delivery of Core Skills: Numeracy & ICT**  
Social Services and Healthcare  
Modern Apprenticeship Framework

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## Background

In August 2019, a focus group convened to discuss the challenges some providers are having in delivering core skills using naturally occurring evidence, and how these challenges could be overcome. This group involved independent training providers, external verifiers, college work-based learning assessors, and representatives from SDS and the SQA Awarding Body. The session focused on the delivery of core skills, particularly numeracy and ICT, for Social Services and Healthcare Modern Apprenticeship frameworks and the Social Services Children and Young People framework.

## Objectives

The purpose of the session was to:

- develop a mutual understanding of any barriers to providers using naturally occurring evidence;
- share approaches used by work-based learning assessors to gather core skill evidence;
- critique and suggest bespoke solutions for generating naturally occurring assessment evidence in the workplace; and
- gather the high-level anonymised learning from the session to share with the wider Modern Apprentice provider network.

## Barriers to using naturally occurring evidence

In Health and Social Care, some skills are less likely to occur naturally and can be more difficult to contextualise than others. For example, a Care Worker's spoken communication can be assessed when they are conveying information to patients and their families. Whereas, assessing specific numeracy skills may be more difficult if they do not commonly use these skills on a day-to-day basis.

There were two suggestions for how providers could undertake core skills assessments in lieu of naturally occurring evidence. Assessors should:

- frame the questions in a context that is relevant to the learner; and
- try and integrate, where possible, numeracy and ICT during project work. For example, issuing learners with a piece of work involving research is a good way to incorporate multiple core skills.

## What should providers be doing?

SQA Accreditation has detailed [guidance](#) on what providers should do when assessing workplace core skills units which can be found on their website.

In summary providers should plan and give consideration as to what tasks in the workplace might generate core skill evidence (which might be part of the SVQ):

- use naturally occurring work placed evidence wherever you can for assessment tasks;
- where naturally occurring evidence from the workplace cannot be used, consider contextualising evidence drawing on the standards in the [SQA assessment support packs](#). This may, for example, be an industry-

based project or industry related task;

- where the above two possibilities have been exhausted utilise the exemplar assessment for those parts of the unit standards not already covered;
- think about trying to create assessments that cover more than one core skill. For example, a work-related project for ICT and numeracy could be created for the elements that cannot be generated in the workplace; BUT
- don't just head straight for the exemplar and use that for everything because it meets the standard

## How can providers check their assessments meet the correct core skill level?

- Plan well and compare your tasks to exemplar tasks in the assessments on the SQA Accreditation website
- Arrange a development visit from an awarding body such as SQA to seek feedback on your assessments. If you do this, it is important that you are well prepared with clear questions and thoughts about what you intend to do so that you get the most out of the visit.

## Learning points

The group was asked what they would take away from the day's session.

### Assessors:

- will share what was discussed with colleagues and will do some standardisation and develop materials to share;
- really appreciated the clarification on the complexity of the ICT task;
- got some great ideas for numeracy contextualisation;
- feel it is a good idea to try and integrate, where possible, numeracy and ICT particularly when doing a project; and
- got some great tips about creating marking guidelines for ICT.

### External verifiers:

- the session confirmed what they have found in practice, which is that evidence cannot always be generated through natural situations for some sectors;
- there is a need to create more working groups and have development sessions on this;
- new providers/assessors will need support on this activity; and
- the outcomes of this session should be passed to senior external verifiers for consideration.

### SDS:

- will consider whether we can support more specific sharing for apprenticeship providers;
- will alert the Scottish Apprenticeships Advisory Board Standards and Framework Group to this issue; and
- will consider how we can support these asks going forward in association with SQA accreditation and awarding bodies.



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