

# A Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6

GL52 46

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This document provides you with information you will require to deliver a Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare.

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Information about the Scottish Social Services Council can be accessed at:  
**[www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)**

<b>Version Control</b>			
<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Revision(s)</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.0	New Framework Specification post FA developments	Frank Quinn	<b>October 2020</b>
1.1	Addition of Customised Route GR84 46	Deborah Miller	<b>September 2021</b>
1.2	Addition of Assessment Arrangements 23/24	Deborah Miller	<b>July 2023</b>
1.3	Removal of Customised Units and Update of Assessment Arrangements	Deborah Miller	<b>September 2024</b>

## Background

One of the key recommendations of Sir Ian Wood's review on developing the young workforce was to "develop better connectivity and co-operation between education and the world of work to ensure young people at all levels of education understand the expectations of employers, and that employers are properly engaged" (Scottish Government response to "Developing the Young Workforce; 2015). The Scottish Government set ambitious targets to ensure this connectivity is delivered through a partnership of schools, colleges/training providers and employers.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS), alongside other partners, is working with industry to increase the range of work-based learning opportunities for pupils in the senior phase of secondary schools. One of the ways this is being achieved is through the development of Foundation Apprenticeships and SDS is leading this initiative. Foundation Apprenticeships will allow pupils to gain vocational qualifications that combine sector specific skills alongside the knowledge that underpins these skills in a workplace setting while still at school.

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare aims to give pupils in S5 and S6 the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge to work towards an SVQ and so enter a career in adult social services. It will also help pupils to gain the core units of the MA in Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) in Social Services and Healthcare, leaving them with fewer units to complete when they start the Modern Apprenticeship programme.

## The Social Services sector in Scotland

There are over 199,600 social service workers in Scotland today working in a range of settings with a variety of different people who use services. One in 13 people employed in Scotland work in social services. Of these 27% are employed by the third sector, 32% by the public sector and 41% by the private sector.

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) labour market reports on the social services sector indicate that the number of people working in the sector has risen very considerably since the mid-1990s. Data shows that the sector grew by approximately 50% during the period 1998-2008. Since then there has been an increase of 5.3%. The workforce is now approximately 7.7% of Scottish employment.

Registrants need to have or be working towards a qualification for the job they do. These qualifications are based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) or other benchmark standards. Qualifications in adult care range from SCQF level 6 for support workers, SCQF level 7 for practitioners, to SCQF level 9 and above for managers. Pupils taking the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare will not have to register with the SSSC as they will not be in employment. Should they be employed however they will need to be registered.

Information about the SSSC and registration can be found at:

<https://www.sssc.uk.com/>

## Why choose Social Services?

Social services is a challenging and rewarding career. Social service workers provide support and help to people who need it, helping them to live full and valued lives in the community. Social service workers can work with a variety of people from all different backgrounds and of all abilities:

- older people
- children and young people
- carers of people who use services
- children or adults with physical /sensory and/or learning disabilities
- children or adults with autistic spectrum disorder
- people with mental health problems
- people with addiction issues
- homeless people
- refugees and asylum seekers
- people with HIV/AIDS or long-term illness

Social service workers include people working in social work and in social care settings such as care home services for adults and community care, and in early years settings such as nurseries or out of school care clubs. There are many different career opportunities and career pathways across this range of settings and possibilities for entry at several levels. Job roles in adult services include personal assistant, care assistant, support worker, supervisor, senior care worker, team leader, care home manager, centre manager and service manager. Job roles in children's services include play or nursery assistant, play leader, nursery officer, childhood practitioner, and out of school co-ordinator.

## What is the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare?

The Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in Social Services and Healthcare is for pupils in S5 and S6 and typically takes 2 years to complete. Increasingly the framework is also available over a shorter duration, typically a single academic year.

Irrespective of the delivery model, the Social Services and Healthcare framework includes two core elements, namely:

1. National Progression Award in Social Services and Healthcare
2. Work Based Learning units

The full programme specification is outlined further in this document.

## Background / rationale

This Foundation Apprenticeship supports the commitment to provide relevant work-based vocational education and training as part of the senior phase curriculum. This will prepare young people for direct entry into a career in the Social Services sector by equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to work effectively from day one of employment. This includes both the development of practical and technical skills alongside the development of

learner meta-skills, supported via project-based learning. It also highlights meaningful vocational pathways as challenging and valuable alternatives to existing academic subjects.

## Partnership

A Foundation Apprenticeship is about the right balance between delivering the taught elements of the programme (the NPA) and the development of work-based competences the meta-skills and work-based learning elements.

Development of true competence depends on the continuing acquisition and application of underpinning skills and knowledge. Young people need to build real workplace skills including both those that are specialist to the chosen career and the generic behaviours and attributes that apply to any workplace. This is achieved in a real work setting involving meaningful activities introduced throughout the programme.

Foundation Apprenticeships are delivered by partnerships comprised of school, learning provider and employer. The learning provider is responsible for the approvals, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of the component units and qualifications. Where multiple learning providers are involved, arrangements between them will be detailed in an SQA Partnership Agreement.

The learning provider must have the appropriate SQA centre and qualification approvals in place before it can deliver the Foundation Apprenticeship.

For further support and guidance on SQA's approval, quality assurance processes and SQA Partnership Agreements, please see:

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/101347.html>

Employers are an essential part of the partnership and can contribute in a range of ways, from creating a workplace challenge, to coaching and mentoring, to interviewing and selection. They may also be involved in the assessment of the work-based learning element.

## Pastoral Care

The young people embarking on this Foundation Apprenticeship are school pupils and therefore all those involved in delivering the programme have a duty of care. This includes providing appropriate health and safety training and measures to ensure the safety of the young people, including relevant safeguarding requirements that are required by respective Local Authority and School partners. This must be in the context of the specific workplaces of the individual pupils (one of the mandatory units of the FA covers health and safety).

In addition, a workplace mentor must be assigned to be a point of contact for the young person when they are not in the school environment.

Work placement allocation and methodology, whether on-site or through remote working, should take cognisance of the learner's personal circumstances to maximise the learner experience and opportunity.

## How should the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare be delivered?

Often, delivery and assessment of the relevant NPA occurs at the start of the programme so that the underpinning knowledge can be obtained before contextualising within the work-based learning element.

The work-based learning element is designed to offer the learning access to the workplace, either physically onsite or through remote working. Learning providers are required to identify host employer(s) to provide the work placement opportunity. Employer(s) are asked to provide real work activity aligned to the organisations objectives and to support the development of evidence for assessment against the outcomes

Involvement of industry is encouraged across the entire programme of learning. Learner success is best reflected when the delivery of the theory and practical elements are aligned. This approach maximises the contextualisation for the learner and offers the opportunity to put into practice underpinning learning.

### Work Based learning Element:

The Social Services and Healthcare FA contains units aligned to the respective modern apprenticeship programme. Providers are encouraged to utilise the SVQ route where physical access to the workplace remains and assess in accordance to the SVQ assessment standards required for external verification.

*Please refer to the Foundation Apprenticeship Product Specification for further information on the principles of Foundation Apprenticeship delivery.*

*Please refer to the Annex's at the end of this document for a detailed breakdown of the units and codes within the framework(s)*

- *Annex 1: FA Social Services and Healthcare: SVQ Route*

## Certification

SQA will issue the commemorative certificate for the Foundation Apprenticeship.

Learning providers must ensure that they have appropriate approvals in place with SQA for the Foundation Apprenticeship and all mandatory components. Candidates must be entered and resulted for all relevant units for verification and certification purposes.

Once all contributing results are entered on SQA systems, the candidate's commemorative certificate will be produced.

SQA Awarding Body quality assurance requirements apply to the delivery of the SQA component units and group awards. Centres are required to sign up to the relevant Assessment Strategy for the SVQ and comply with all its requirements.

## Social Services and Healthcare placements for the Foundation Apprenticeship

When selecting a placement for pupils you should choose from the list of adult services. If the pupils wish to work with children there is a separate framework that describes the opportunities there are in social services (children and young people).

Pupils ideally have the opportunity of 2 placements. We recommend that placements are in community care or in day care resources for adults or older adults. In day care services workers provide a supportive environment for individuals to develop skills and participate in a wide range of activities such as arts and crafts, music, games and sports. A placement offering this experience could be a day centre attached to a residential home for older adults or a community support resource centre supporting people with learning difficulties to use leisure facilities.

Individuals are encouraged to meet people and learn skills that could lead to greater independence. Increasingly workers help people who use services to make use of community resources to develop skills.

In community care support services workers help vulnerable adults to continue living within their own homes. They support individuals to become an active part of the community and promote independence.

The Foundation Apprenticeship is designed to help pupils to communicate with the users of care services, to understand and support the social and developmental needs of users of services and to help ensure their safety and develop resilience. It is not designed to develop skills in personal physical care which would not be appropriate for school age pupils.

## Learner Selection and Entry Requirements

The Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare is aimed at pupils with an interest and enthusiasm in exploring this area of work. Although set at SCQF L6, due to the contextualised learning experience where underpinning theory and practice are aligned with industry, learners operating at SCQF L5 or above on arrival are encouraged.

## Equalities

We expect those involved in the development, recruitment and delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships to be pro-active in ensuring that no-one should be denied opportunities because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or pregnancy and that any barriers (real or perceived) are addressed to support all pupils. These are the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 and training providers and employers must comply with this Act to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to and promotion within the industry.

Our emphasis throughout is upon equality and diversity both for new entrants to the sector and opportunities for progression for the existing workforce.

## Learner Progression

Foundation Apprenticeships are directly aligned to three primary progression pathways. These are:

- Modern Apprenticeship

- Further Education
- Higher Education

#### Modern Apprenticeship:

A pupil completing the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare will have achieved a large proportion of the requirements for a Modern Apprenticeship in Healthcare Support at SCQF level 6

Progression routes from the Healthcare Support Modern Apprenticeship could include, for example:

- SVQ Healthcare Support (SCQF Level 7)

#### Further Education:

All Scottish further education colleges recognise the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare as an eligible qualification towards Higher National provision, alongside other qualifications.

#### Higher Education:

Scottish universities recognise the Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare as an eligible qualification towards under-graduate degrees and graduate apprenticeship provision, alongside other qualifications.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

SQA's policy is to recognise prior learning as a method of assessing whether a learner's experience and achievements meet the evidence requirements (i.e. the standard) of a SQA Unit or Units and which may or may not have been developed through a course of learning.

More information can be found on the [SQA website](#).

### **Foundation Apprenticeships – assessment arrangements 2024/25**

SQA and SDS can confirm that learners who are starting a Foundation Apprenticeship in 2024-25, completing in 2025 or beyond, must be assessed using the original Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks and accordingly, learn and be assessed in a workplace.



## Foundation Apprenticeships Framework Specification: Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6

GL52 46 Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare			
Group Award Title	Unit Title	SCQF Level	SCQF Credits
<b>GL3W 46</b>  <b>National Progression Award (NPA) in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6</b>	HD6J 46 Social Services in Scotland	6	6
	HD6V 46 Safeguarding People	6	6
	HD6T 46 Communication in Care Relationships	6	6
	HD6W 46 Safe Practice and Wellbeing in Social Services	6	3
	HD6X 46 Human Development and Social Influences	6	3
<b>GH5Y 22</b>  <b>SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF level 6 (part of)</b>	H5L5 04 Develop your own knowledge and practice	6	8
	H5NA 04 Support effective communication	6	10
	H5NB 04 Support the health and safety of yourself and individuals	6	10
	H5NC 04 Support the safeguarding of children individuals	6	9
Foundation Apprenticeship Certification Unit	HE6E 04 Foundation Apprenticeship Certification Unit	-	0
<b>TOTAL SCQF CREDIT POINTS</b>			<b>61</b>

One SCQF credit point is equivalent to ten (10) notional hours of learning.