

# Apprenticeship Standard for a Healthcare Support Worker (HCSW)

## Assessment Plan

### Summary of Assessment

On completion of this apprenticeship the individual will be a competent and job-ready Healthcare Support Worker. The apprenticeship standard provides a high level description of the skills, knowledge, values and behaviours required of the Healthcare Support Worker apprentice. The assessment plan describes how the apprentice is assessed at the end of their apprenticeship and by whom.

The assessment plan has been informed by ongoing consultation with employers, professional bodies, awarding organisations and training providers. When delivered by high-quality training providers in partnership with employers, assessed by a Skills Funding Agency registered independent assessment organisation and overseen by the quality assurance process it ensures that apprentices become competent Healthcare Support Workers. This can be the first step in a rich and fulfilling career in healthcare.

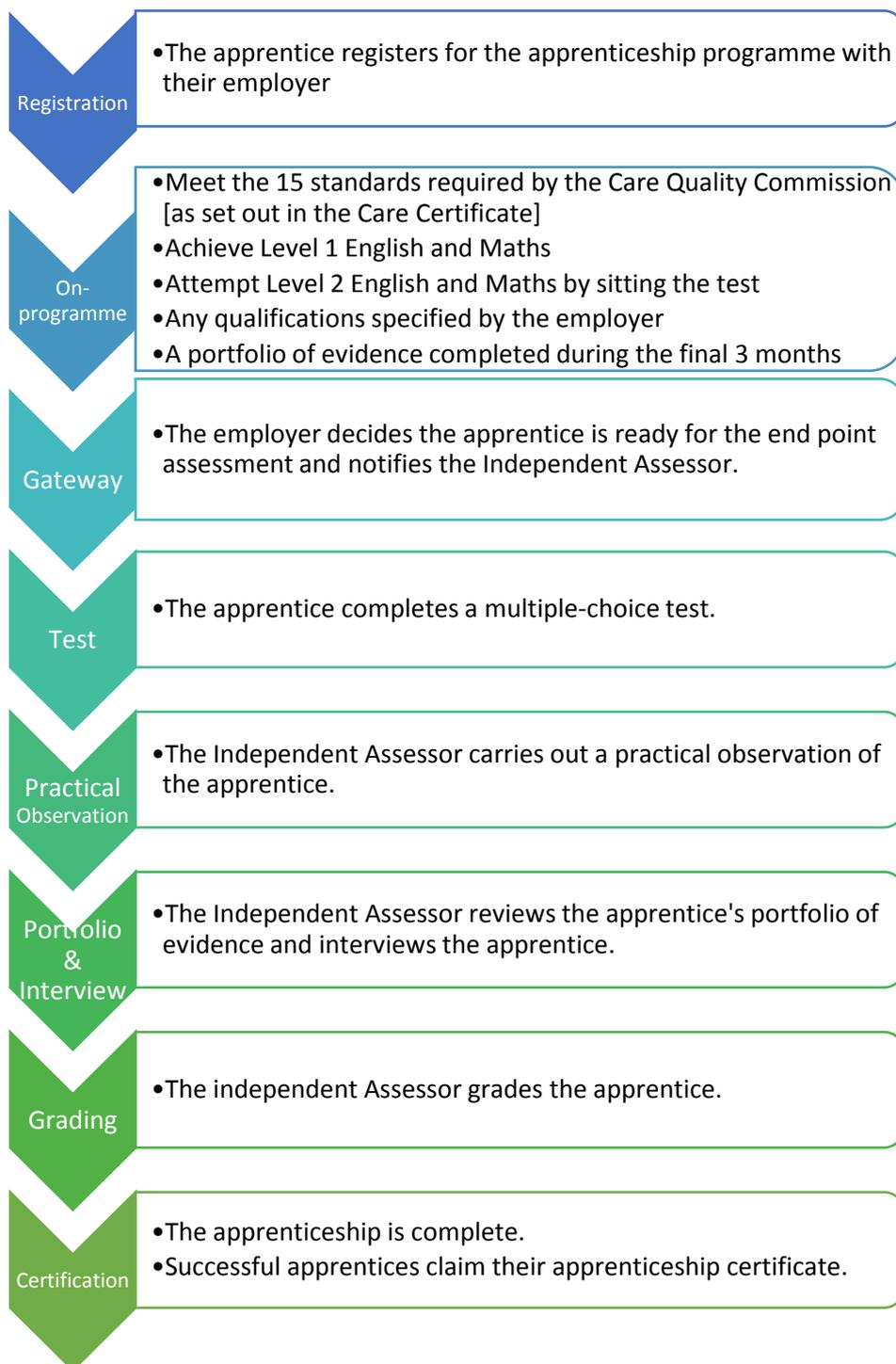
The purpose of the end point assessment is to test (in a synoptic way) the skills, knowledge and behaviours of the apprentice as set out in the apprenticeship standard. End point assessment:

- Provides apprentices with a showcase opportunity to provide oral and documentary evidence of their knowledge, skills and behaviours developed throughout the apprenticeship
- Enables the independent assessor to assess the skills and behaviours of the apprentice by observing the apprentice in the course of their normal work
- Tests the knowledge acquired by the apprentice throughout the apprenticeship.

The end point assessment includes the following components:

1. A **multiple choice test**
2. An **observation of practice** undertaken in the workplace
3. An **evidence portfolio** completed by the apprentice with an **interview**

## Assessment Flowchart



1. The apprentice registers for the apprenticeship programme with their employer
2. The apprentice completes the agreed period of on-programme training

3. The apprentice has sufficient experience, knowledge and skills (including maths and English requirements) and reaches the gateway where they become eligible to attempt the end point assessment
4. The apprentice undertakes the end point assessment with an independent assessor who will oversee the multiple choice test, undertake the practical observation, review the evidence portfolio and lead the final interview. The sequencing of the end point assessment components is determined by the employer and assessor to ensure best fit with local needs.
5. The independent assessor judges whether the apprentice has passed or failed the end point assessment at the end of the final interview. If the apprentice is successful, the final grade is determined by the independent assessor.

## Assessment Overview

Assessment Method	Area Assessed	Assessed by	Grading
Multiple Choice Test	<p>The multiple choice test assesses the following <b>knowledge</b> components of the apprenticeship standard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication</li> <li>2. Health interventions</li> <li>3. Personal and people development</li> <li>4. Health, safety and security</li> <li>5. Equality and diversity</li> </ol>	Independent Assessment Organisation	Pass Merit Distinction
Observation of practice	<p>The observation of practice is undertaken in the workplace to assess higher level <b>skills</b> and <b>behaviours</b>. During the observation of practice the apprentice must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate effectively and handle information</li> <li>2. Demonstrate person centred care and support</li> <li>3. Treat people with dignity, respecting individual's diversity, beliefs, culture, values, needs, privacy and preferences;</li> <li>4. Show respect and empathy for those you work with; have the courage to challenge areas of concern, be adaptable, reliable and consistent;</li> <li>5. Work to best practice in carrying out delegated clinical duties</li> <li>6. Show discretion and self-awareness</li> <li>7. Work as part of a team, seeking help and guidance when they are not sure</li> <li>8. Maintain a safe and healthy working environment</li> <li>9. Use a range of techniques for infection prevention and control including waste management, hand washing and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</li> <li>10. Move and position individuals, equipment and other items safely</li> </ol>	Independent Assessment Organisation	Ungraded above Pass
Evidence Portfolio and Interview	<p>The evidence portfolio is completed by the apprentice in the 3 months leading up to the end point assessment. The portfolio must include direct observation in the workplace as the primary source of evidence.</p> <p>The portfolio must contain reflective accounts completed by the apprentice which demonstrate</p>	Independent Assessment Organisation	Pass Merit Distinction

	<p>their learning and application of knowledge in practice, their <b>values</b> and <b>behaviours</b>.</p> <p>The apprentice is required to evidence the <b>knowledge</b> and <b>skill</b> requirements of the following areas the apprenticeship standard in the portfolio:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication</li> <li>2. Health interventions</li> <li>3. Personal and people development</li> <li>4. Health, safety and security</li> </ol> <p>The interview takes the form of a question and answer session to enable the apprentice to further showcase their <b>knowledge, skills and behaviours</b> from across the Standard. The assessor selects the areas they wish to explore with the apprentice after reviewing responses to the multiple choice test, the evidence portfolio and the outcome of the observation of practice.</p>		
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### On-programme Training, Development and Assessment

Apprentices usually take 12 months to complete this apprenticeship during which they participate in training, development and on-going review activities. These typically include:

- Induction which is specific to their workplace and at a minimum meets the 15 standards required by the Care Quality Commission [as set out in the Care Certificate]
- Study days and training courses
- Mentoring/buddy support
- Completion of workbooks or a portfolio through which the apprentice gathers evidence of their progress
- Structured one to one reviews of their progress with their employer and/or training provider

An apprentice may complete a regulated vocational qualification during the on-programme phase of their apprenticeship.

### Assessment Gateway

Before going forward for end point assessment the apprentice must have completed:

- The apprentice must meet the 15 standards required by the Care Quality Commission [as set out in the Care Certificate]
- Level 1 maths and English
- An evidence portfolio. The apprentice documents their knowledge and skills development as well as their approach to the workplace (the values and behaviours). Evidence must be gathered following completion of their programme of training and development and during the 3 months leading up to the planned date of the end point assessment.

Before going forward for end point assessment the apprentice must have attempted Level 2 maths and English.

Judgement on whether the apprentice is ready for the end point assessment is taken by the employer who should gather views from the training provider and the apprentice to inform this decision. Apprentices should not be put forward for the end point assessment before they are ready.

### **Administering the End Point Assessment**

The end point assessment is triggered by the employer when the gateway requirements have been met, and has determined the readiness of the apprentice. Delivery of all training, development and review activities up to the end point are considered as being on-programme. The independent assessor must not have been involved in any on-programme training, development or on programme review/assessment of the apprentice.

The date and timing of the assessment is agreed with the apprentice and their employer and takes place in the apprentice's normal place of work.

The assessment takes the following format, although the sequencing of the end point assessment components is determined by the employer and assessor to ensure best fit with local needs:

- Multiple choice test. The apprentice sits the test which the independent assessor administers (60 minutes)
- Practical observation. The assessor observes the apprentice in the course of their normal work (minimum of 90 minutes)
- Evidence portfolio and interview. The assessor assesses the evidence portfolio generated by the apprentice  
The interview takes place between the assessor and the apprentice at the end of the assessment (minimum of 30 minutes, maximum of 60 minutes)

For final certification, the apprentice must have passed all components in the end point assessment. At the conclusion of the end point assessment, the independent assessor collates the evidence and determines the final grading for the apprenticeship. The grading decision is made solely by the independent assessor.

The apprentice must attempt all components of the end point assessment on their first attempt. Should the apprentice fail any components they are required to re-take only those components which they have previously failed. Re-takes are permitted after 1 month and within 12 months but not after 12 months. The number of times an apprentice is permitted to re-take the end point assessment within the permitted 12 month time frame is determined by the employer.

## **End Point Assessment**

### **Multiple Choice Test**

The multiple choice test covers all knowledge requirements within the standard:

#### **Communication:**

1. The principles of communication and how to adapt according to the needs of individuals
2. Legislation, policies and ways of working in relation to handling information

#### **Health interventions:**

1. The range of normal physiological measurements and how to measure blood pressure, temperature, height, weight, breathing and pulse rates.
2. Signs of when an individual is in pain and when their physical and/or mental health is deteriorating

3. The effects of limitation on mental capacity and how this affects practice
4. The importance good nutrition and hydration and the effects of poor nutrition and hydration
5. The principles of health promotion
6. The range of activities of daily living
7. The principles of patient centred care and support and consent

### Personal and people development

1. The importance of working within your scope of practice, code of conduct and agreed ways of working
2. Sources of additional support
3. The importance of personal development and how to plan for development activities

### Health, safety and security

1. Legislation, policies and ways of working in relation to health and safety at work
2. The principles of duty of care
3. The signs of abuse; legislation, policies and ways of working in relation to safeguarding and protection from abuse
4. Legislation, policies and ways of working that help to prevent infection; the spread of infection and antimicrobial resistance
5. Risks associated with moving and handling objects and individuals

### Equality and diversity

1. Legislation, policies and ways of working in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion

There are 60 questions of equal weighting in this test and the grade boundaries are set to allow candidates to achieve Pass, Merit and Distinction grades where

Pass = 30 - 39 correct answers

Merit = 40 – 49 correct answers

Distinction = 50 and above correct answers

### **Observation of Practice**

The independent assessor spends a minimum of 90 minutes observing the apprentice during the course of their normal work in their normal place of work. During the observation of practice the apprentice must be able to meet the following requirements in bold:

1. **Communicate effectively with individuals**, their families, carers and healthcare practitioners using a range of techniques, **keeping information confidential**
2. **Handle information** (record, report and store information) related to individuals **in line with local and national policies**
3. **Demonstrate person centred care and support**
4. **Treat people with dignity**, respecting individual's diversity, beliefs, culture, values, needs, privacy and preferences;
5. **Show respect and empathy for those you work with**; have the courage to challenge areas of concern and work to best practice; be adaptable, reliable and consistent;
6. **Show discretion and self-awareness**
7. **Work as part of a team**, seeking help and guidance when they are not sure
8. **Maintain a safe and healthy working environment**
9. **Use a range of techniques for infection prevention and control** including waste management, hand washing and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
10. **Move and position individuals**, equipment and other items **safely**

Requirements not emboldened which do not occur naturally during the observation period may be tested during the interview.

The practical observation is ungraded above a Pass by the independent assessor.

### **Evidence Portfolio and Interview**

Apprentices collect evidence for the portfolio once they have completed their on-programme training and development. This is normally in final 3 months of the apprenticeship.

The portfolio must include direct observation in the workplace as the primary source of evidence. The portfolio must contain reflective accounts completed by the apprentice which demonstrate their learning and application of knowledge in practice, their values and behaviours.

The portfolio evidences what the apprentice has achieved during the apprenticeship, covering these areas of the apprenticeship standard.

### **Communication**

The apprentice includes evidence to show that they are able to:

1. Communicate effectively with individuals, their families, carers and healthcare practitioners using a range of techniques, keeping information confidential
2. Handle information (record, report and store information) related to individuals in line with local and national policies

### **Health interventions:**

The apprentice includes evidence to show that they are able to:

1. Support individuals with long term conditions, frailty and end of life care
2. Identify and respond to signs of pain or discomfort
3. Promote physical health and wellbeing of individuals
4. Assist with an individuals' overall comfort and wellbeing
5. Support individuals with activities of daily living
6. Recognise deteriorations in health, long term conditions, physiological measurements, skin integrity
7. Report changes in physical and mental health needs
8. Promote mental and physical health and wellbeing
9. Recognise limitations in mental capacity and respond appropriately
10. Recognise and respond to signs of poor mental health for example dementia, depression, anxiety or other cognitive issues
11. Perform basic life support for individuals using appropriate resuscitation techniques and equipment in a simulated situation
12. Undertake a range of physiological measurements using the appropriate equipment including height, weight, temperature, pulse, breathing rate and blood pressure

### **Personal and people development**

The apprentice includes evidence to show that they are able to:

1. Take responsibility for, prioritise and reflect on their own actions and work
2. Work as part of a team, seeking help and guidance when they are not sure
3. Maintain and further develop their own skills and knowledge through development activities; maintain evidence of their personal development and actively prepare for and participate in appraisal

### **Health, safety and security**

The apprentice includes evidence to show that they are able to:

1. Maintain a safe and healthy working environment

2. Take appropriate action in response to incidents or emergencies following local guidelines
3. Use a range of techniques for infection prevention and control including waste management, hand washing and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
4. Move and position individuals, equipment and other items safely

The final interview takes place between the independent assessor and the apprentice and lasts for a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 60 minutes.

The purpose of the interview is to enable the apprentice to further showcase their knowledge, skills and behaviours from across the Standard. The assessor checks and clarifies any matters arising from the multiple choice test results, the evidence portfolio or from the observation of practice.

The portfolio and interview is graded as Pass, Merit or Distinction by the independent assessor where

**Pass = Meets the standard.**

The portfolio comprises of a range of valid sources of evidence, short reflective accounts show satisfactory evidence and ability to relate concepts and theories to practice, evidence broadly relates to the Standard and is partially mapped to the knowledge, skills and behaviour requirements, is able to answer questions clearly and correctly and more fully with secondary questioning. Combining evidence demonstrates the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the Standard have been met.

**Merit = Exceeds the standard**

The portfolio comprises of a range of valid sources of evidence, short reflective accounts show evidence of relating concepts and theories to practice, evidence directly relates to the Standard and is mostly mapped to the knowledge, skills and behaviour requirements, is able to respond to questions clearly, correctly and fully without secondary questioning and there is some evidence of enhanced understanding through wider reading

**Distinction = Far exceeds the standard**

The portfolio comprises of a creative range of valid sources of evidence, reflective accounts show evidence of relating concepts and theories to practice and ability to make connections between learning and future practice, all evidence directly and succinctly relates to the Standard and is accurately and fully mapped to the knowledge, skills and behaviour requirements, is able to respond to questions correctly and engage in wider discussion demonstrating understanding of concepts and theories achieved through extensive reading

## **Independence**

End point assessments are carried out by staff from independent end-point assessment organisations on the Skills Funding Agency's Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations. An apprenticeship certificate is only issued if approved by the independent assessor.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

In summary:

Apprentice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates fully in their training and development</li> <li>• Actively contributes to their performance review</li> <li>• Contributes to the decision on the timing of their end point assessment</li> </ul>
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Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports the apprentice throughout their training and development</li> <li>• Conducts reviews to monitor progress</li> <li>• Undertakes direct observations of the apprentice which form part of the evidence portfolio</li> <li>• Determines when the apprentice is ready to attempt the end point assessment</li> </ul>
Training Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides on-going training for the apprentice</li> <li>• Provides tools and processes to support the apprentice</li> <li>• Carries out regular reviews with the apprentice and employer</li> <li>• Undertakes direct observations of the apprentice which form part of the evidence portfolio</li> <li>• Advises the employer when the apprentice is ready to undertake the end point assessment.</li> </ul>
Assessment Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes no part in the training of those apprentices for whom they complete end point assessments</li> <li>• Devises and administers the end point assessment</li> <li>• Recruits and trains independent assessors</li> <li>• Ensures assessors are occupationally competent, are able to assess the performance of the apprentice in all components of the end point assessment and are able to determine the grade achieved</li> <li>• Maintains robust quality assurance processes</li> <li>• Actively participates in the quality assurance procedures described in this assessment plan</li> </ul>
Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administers and oversees the multiple choice/short answer knowledge test</li> <li>• Assesses the apprentice in the course of their normal work</li> <li>• Assesses the evidence portfolio and conducts the final interview</li> <li>• Determines the final apprenticeship grade</li> </ul>

### Quality Assurance

Assessment organisations that deliver end point assessment for the Healthcare Support Worker apprenticeship must be accepted by the Skills Funding Agency onto the Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations.

Skills Funding Agency registered end point assessment organisations develop the assessments and supporting materials. Assessments are designed to produce assessment outcomes that are consistent and reliable, allowing fair and proper comparison between apprentices employed in different types and sizes of organisations.

Only assessors appointed by the apprenticeship end point assessment organisation will be able to carry out the end point assessment. Assessors must:

- Be occupationally competent in the appropriate field of practice

*Occupationally competent means that each assessor must be capable of carrying out the full requirements within the competence they are assessing. Occupational competence must be at an individual function level which might mean different people being involved during the on-programme*

*delivery however the assessor involved in the end point assessment must be occupationally competent across the whole apprenticeship standard.*

- Be a registered healthcare professional or have completed a level 3 apprenticeship or regulated occupational competence qualification at level 3 or above.
- Hold, or be working towards, a formal assessor qualification.
- Have experience of working in a health or social care setting within the last 2 years

Assessment organisations are required, *as a minimum*, to

- hold an internal annual standardisation event which focusses on current assessment practices and issues which have arisen
- meet annually with all other assessment organisations for Healthcare Support Worker to share practices and resolve issues which have arisen

External quality assurance is provided by Ofqual through regulation of the end point assessment. All organisations that offer end point assessment for this Standard will be recognised awarding organisations by demonstrating to Ofqual that they meet the General Conditions of Recognition.

## End-point Grading

The successful apprentice receives an overall grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction. The grade is derived from the components of the end point assessment using the following table

Observation of practice	MCQ test	Portfolio & interview	Overall grade
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Merit	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Merit
Pass	Merit	Pass	Pass
Pass	Merit	Merit	Merit
Pass	Merit	Distinction	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Pass	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Merit	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

The final judgement on the competency of the apprentice, the grade to be awarded for each component and the overall grade rests with the independent assessor.

## Implementation of the Apprenticeship Assessment

### Affordability

This approach to independent assessment is evidenced based and sector specific and has been tested with employers who have confirmed that it is the preferred approach.

Cost analysis verified that this approach was the most cost effective method of all. The cost of the independent assessment forms no more than 10% of the overarching cost of the apprenticeship standard.

## **Manageability and Feasibility**

The end point assessment has been designed to meet the needs of all employers/environments within the healthcare sector from NHS Trusts to private institutions delivering their own work based provision to small SME single site and healthcare businesses reliant on high quality training provision to deliver their work based training.

We believe that the approach is manageable and feasible as the necessary expertise already exists within the sector. We would expect apprenticeship assessment organisations to tap into organisations that are accountable for these experts when recruiting for independent assessors. Utilising existing expertise would ensure a sufficiency of qualified assessors with a good geographical spread. Under these conditions, the anticipated uptake of the Apprenticeship in the first year is 1000 starts.