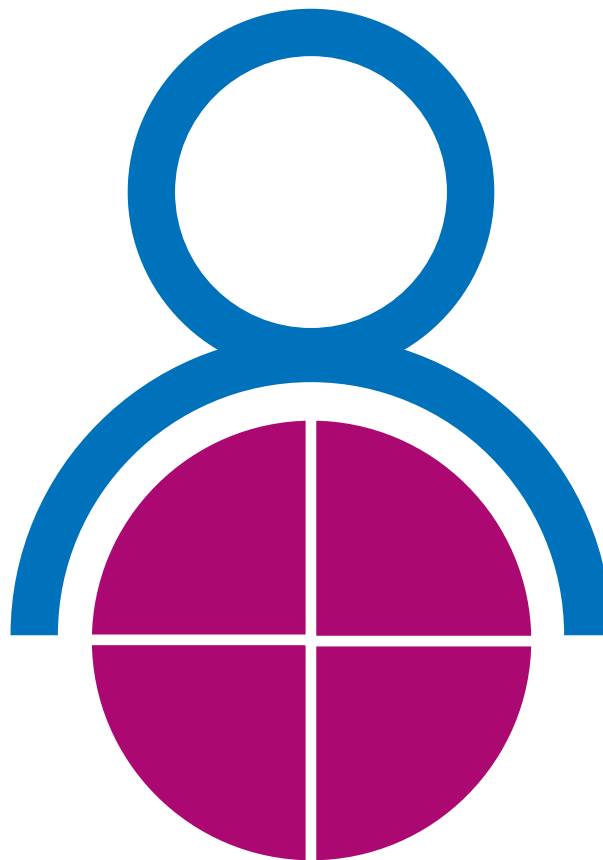


Core skills

Core skills include English, maths and digital skills, as well as employability skills such as the ability to work in a team and problem solve.

This resource will help you to understand what core skills are needed by adult social care workers.



Core skills



With core skills

Core skills enable workers to:

- provide high quality care and support
- complete adult social care qualifications including the Care Certificate
- meet regulatory requirements and sector standards such as CQC requirements and the Social Care Commitment.



Without core skills

The impact of poorly developed core skills at work could mean workers:

- struggle to read and understand written information, procedures and policies
- are unable to estimate quantities, costs and timings that could result in costly mistakes
- lack the confidence to write accurate reports and records
- have difficulty communicating
- find it difficult to achieve vocational qualifications
- put themselves and others at unnecessary risk.



English skills in social care

English skills include the ability to write, read, speak, listen and respond.

Staff use these skills to:

- communicate with people who need care and support, colleagues and other health care professionals
- write and understand care plans
- understand and follow risk assessments
- fill in an accident form
- do a review of a care plan.

Staff who lack these skills:

- struggle to read and understand written information including health and safety instructions, policy guidance and care plans
- are unable to write clearly and accurately when completing care plans, leaving messages or filling in charts
- cannot produce case records or risk assessment logs to a professional standard
- have difficulty following verbal instructions or communicating appropriately with colleagues, service users and relatives
- find it difficult to achieve vocational qualifications.

As a general guide, everyone working in social care should be able to:

- read and understand health and safety notices and instructions
- read and understand reports
- punctuate sentences correctly in written work, including commas and apostrophes
- make effective contributions in meetings, appraisals and training sessions
- fill in an accident form correctly
- use the index in a catalogue or phone book.

Higher level English skills enable staff to:

- construct in depth reports on performance
- communicate with a range of professionals about specialised topics
- write content for advertising and promotions relevant to an audience
- deal with complaints in a professional manner.



Number skills in social care

Number skills include the ability to understand and use numbers.

Staff use these skills to:

- record fluid intake
- measure medication
- calculate body mass index (BMI)
- plan staff rotas and understand wage slips
- manage stock levels
- calculate budgets.

Staff who lack these skills:

- are unable to estimate quantities, costs and timings
- lack confidence to make routine calculations
- don't always take accurate measurements or readings and are unable to spot errors
- make mistakes when recording numbers
- have difficulty understanding graphs and charts
- don't understand wage slips, tax deductions or options relating to pensions
- have difficulty understanding time and timetables, leading to poor time management.

As a general guide, everyone working in social care should be able to:

- do basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
- select and compare different prices
- understand basic measurements of weight and fluids
- complete time sheets
- do a stock take
- complete a MAR (Medication Administration Record) sheet accurately
- check the deductions on a wage slip.

Higher level number skills enable staff to:

- understand and calculate budgets and forecasts
- use charts and graphs to assess profits.



Digital skills in social care

Digital skills include the ability to find and manage digital information, share personal data digitally, use digital technology and make use of e:learning.

Staff use these skills to:

- complete e:learning
- use assistive technology eg. fall monitors
- help people who use care and support to Skype relatives and friends
- use a sat nav to find directions
- research local activities for a person who needs support
- safely store staff records
- fill out and upload digital photos to care plans online
- use telecare systems eg. remote prescribing and remote consultation.

Staff who lack these skills:

- are unable to communicate online in ways colleagues and external organisations expect or prefer
- cannot make best use of information and resources available on the internet
- are excluded from training and development opportunities that require e:learning
- don't use technology to become more efficient and effective.

As a general guide, everyone working in social care should be able to:

- produce a word document
- save a file on a computer
- write and send an email
- find relevant and reliable information on the internet
- use e:learning
- use assistive technology relevant to their role such as movement sensors or personal alarms
- know how to stay safe online.

Higher level digital skills enable staff to:

- log stock levels on an Excel spreadsheet
- conduct in depth research using the internet
- monitor staff learning and development digitally
- update and manage a website
- use Skype with a service user to contact their relatives
- set up and use social media accounts.



Employability skills in social care

Employability skills include the ability to work in a team, problem solve, work responsibly, plan your own learning and development and manage your own health and well being.

Staff use these skills to:

- prioritising work load
- ensuring you arrive on time to work
- being accountable at all times
- working with other teams to put together a care package for someone
- doing qualifications and training relevant to your role
- dealing with stress and pressure at work.

Staff who lack these skills:

- are unable to work with colleagues to provide care and support
- find it hard to take responsibility for their work
- lack the confidence to problem solve
- have low morale due to a lack of personal development
- take more time off due to stress, anxiety or other ill health
- struggle to learn and develop.

As a general guide, everyone working in social care should be able to:

- work responsibly and be accountable
- understand and implement all relevant workplace policies, procedures and follow agreed ways of working
- build constructive relationships with a wide range of people
- reflect on their own skills and performance, learn and develop
- manage their own health and wellbeing and respond effectively to workplace stress.

Higher level employability skills enable staff to:

- lead and support effective team working amongst colleagues
- respond positively to challenging or complex relationships in the workplace
- ensure regular reflective practice and follow a detailed programme of personal development
- review and improve workplace policies and procedures.