

Guidance for delivering SQA Certificate of Work Readiness in NHS Scotland



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1. Introduction



1. Introduction

This guidance is designed for NHSScotland employers. It explains how employers can provide work placements for unemployed young people as part of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Certificate of Work Readiness. It describes roles and responsibilities of NHSS staff and partner organisations at each stage of the process.

What is the Certificate of Work Readiness?

The **Certificate of Work Readiness** is an SQA award designed specifically for young people who are ready for their first experience of the world of work but who need some guided support. This **SCQF Level 4** qualification was developed by **Skills Development Scotland (SDS)** in partnership with **SQA** and employers.

The Certificate of Work Readiness provides employers with a qualification framework which can be part of a high-quality work experience for unemployed young people and gives young people the chance to demonstrate the value they bring to the workplace.

The employer works in partnership with an authorised learning provider to deliver the Certificate of Work Readiness and to provide the young person with a 'real life' work placement. The learning provider will support the employer to assess the young person's performance and to decide whether they have demonstrated satisfactory work-readiness in the workplace.









1. Introduction

Why use the Certificate of Work Readiness?

The Certificate of Work Readiness has benefits for employers and for young people.




Benefits to the employer

The Certificate of Work Readiness programme can help your Board by:

-  Supporting the design of work placements to ensure they deliver what the young person needs.
-  providing a structure to enable employers to offer meaningful work placements
-  Providing support and development for staff who are supervising and mentoring the young person.
-  Providing access to a pool of young people who are enthusiastic and have a fresh perspective.
-  Providing access to work placement opportunities
-  Supporting workforce diversity

Benefits to the young person

The young person will benefit from the work placement by:

-  achieving a transferable qualification recognised by employers
-  developing transferable skills in self-evaluation, planning and goal-setting that can be applied to any workplace/role
-  improving his/her job prospects.

1. Introduction

How is the Certificate of Work Readiness funded?

The [Certificate of Work Readiness](#) is supported through the [Employability Fund](#). This funding, managed by [SDS](#), supports the learning provider to deliver the Certificate of Work Readiness.

As the employer, you may have costs in relation to taking a young person on a work placement.

These costs may include:

- time for recruitment and selection
- work wear such as protective clothing, footwear and equipment
- time for supervision, support and mentoring
- time for review and assessment processes.



How is the Certificate of Work Readiness structured?

The [Certificate of Work Readiness](#) is made up of 5 SQA units:

- 1 Responsibilities of Employment**
- 2 Dealing with Work Situations**
- 3 Personal Development: Self and Work**
- 4 Skills for Customer Care**
- 5 Practical Work Place Skills**


1. Introduction

How might a work placement be structured?

The young person is likely to spend two to three weeks with the learning provider to prepare them for the work placement. The employer and learning provider will agree the length and timing of the work placement to enable the young person to complete the programme. The programme will vary depending on individual and organisational needs and can be anything from 10 weeks to 16 weeks. The young person will spend:

- three or four days a week on placement to achieve a minimum of 190 hours
- one or two days a week with the learning provider to further develop their employability and career management skills.

The work placement should introduce the young person to the working environment and enable them to develop employability skills. Employers should ensure that the placements are suitable for young people with little or no workplace experience.



More information to help employers to deliver the work experience element of the programme can be found in this guidance.

You will find further information about the content and structure of the qualification on [SQA's website](#).

Delivering the Certificate of Work Readiness

Employers are supported throughout the planning and delivery of the [Certificate of Work Readiness](#) by SDS, Jobcentre Plus and the learning provider. A [checklist](#) is available to ensure successful planning and delivery of the programme.

1. Introduction

The roles and responsibilities of each partner are outlined below:

Skills Development Scotland will work with you to establish work placements as part of the Certificate of Work Readiness



SDS is responsible for:

- Supporting you to identify a suitable learning provider.
- Approaching the learning provider on your behalf.
- Agreeing funding with the learning provider.
- Participating in recruiting and selecting young people to the programme.
- Maintaining regular contact with the learning provider to optimise the young person's learning experience.
- Working with Jobcentre Plus to support the young person to find new opportunities, as appropriate.
- Working with Jobcentre Plus and the learning provider to promote opportunities to young people



1. Introduction

The roles and responsibilities of each partner are outlined below:

The learning provider will work with you to offer an appropriate work placement as part of the Certificate of Work Readiness.

The learning provider is responsible for:

- Agreeing funding with SDS.
- Contacting you to discuss your requirements.
- Agreeing with you, the activities and expectations of the young person.
- Agreeing with you, the content and timetable for the programme.
- Working in partnership with SDS and you to promote opportunities and recruit young people to the programme.
- Enrolling the young person onto the programme.
- Delivering the preparatory units and parts of units that will support the young person before they undertake their work placement.
- Working with you to deliver the underpinning knowledge and understanding of the core skills that will be assessed in the workplace.
- Dealing with any issues or difficulties that may arise with the young person.
- Maintaining regular contact with you and SDS to optimise the young person's learning experience.
- Ensuring that a qualified assessor has delivered and assessed all five component SQA units.
- Supporting you to assess the young person's work-readiness and to complete the relevant paperwork.
- Assessing and verifying that the young person has the underpinning knowledge and skills of the Certificate of Work Readiness.



1. Introduction

The roles and responsibilities of each partner are outlined below:

Jobcentre Plus will work with SDS and the learning provider to establish the [Certificate of Work Readiness programme](#).

jobcentreplus

JobCentre Plus is responsible for:

- Promoting opportunities to young people, as appropriate.
- Referring suitable young people to the programme, as appropriate.
- Working with SDS to support the young person to find new opportunities, as appropriate.



1. Introduction

What are the employer's responsibilities?

*As the **employer**, you are responsible for:*

- Identifying areas for work placements and the resources needed to support the programme.
- Identifying activities and tasks that the young person will carry out during the placement.
- Ensuring that existing staff have the skills and support needed to supervise and mentor the young person in the workplace.
- Agreeing with SDS a suitable learning provider.
- Working with the learning provider to agree the activities and expectations of the young person.
- Working with the learning provider to agree the programme's content and timetable.
- The recruitment of young people, working in partnership with SDS and the learning provider.
- Ensuring that the young person receives an appropriate induction to the work environment.
- Working with the learning provider to deliver the underpinning knowledge and understanding of the core skills that will be assessed in the workplace.
- Supporting and mentoring the young person in the workplace.
- Monitoring and evaluating the young person's performance, with support from the learning provider.
- Liaising with the learning provider if any issues arise during the work placement.
- Assessing the young person's work-readiness – you will be supported by the learning provider.
- Maintaining regular contact with the learning provider to optimise the young person's learning experience.

2. Setting-up work placements




2. Setting-up work placements

Developing the work placement plan

This section provides guidance to plan for the [Certificate of Work Readiness](#) programme. At this stage, you will work with colleagues and be supported by SDS, Jobcentre Plus and a learning provider to:

- Identify appropriate areas for work placements and the resources needed to support the programme.
- Identify the tasks and activities the young person will carry out during the placement.
- Ensure existing staff have the skills and support needed to supervise and mentor the young person.
- Agree the content and timetable for the programme
- Recruit the young person to the programme.
- Agree and identify the relevant partner to resolve problems that may arise e.g. problems with benefits, non-attendance.



It is essential that you take time to prepare for the work placement. [Skills for Health](#) resources provide information and advice in relation to planning and delivering effective placements.



Action Implementation Plan

NHS Lothian produced an Action Implementation Plan to support their Facilities Academy Certificate of Work Readiness programme. The plan identified tasks the Board needed to carry out at the different stages in the programme – before, during and after the work placement - and the staff who were responsible for the activities.

A copy of the plan is available [here](#).

2. Setting-up work placements

Involving staff in the development process

There are three elements to this process:

1 Identifying and agreeing the departments or areas where the young person will be based.

2 Working with colleagues in that area to identify the tasks and activities the young person can do during their work placement.

3 Identifying and agreeing the staff needed to support the programme.

Identifying and agreeing the staff needed to support the programme

There are a number of roles involved in facilitating work placements and you can decide whether these roles can be shared or be undertaken by one person.

The co-ordinator

It is a good idea to have a co-ordinator who can identify and set up work placements. The co-ordinator can be the single point of contact for external partners and can provide support to the supervisor/mentor and the young person.

The supervisor/mentor

As the co-ordinator, you will identify a member of staff who will be responsible for supervising and mentoring the young person during their work placement. It is important that the supervisor/mentor has an approachable manner as they will play a key role in developing the young person.

The supervisor/mentor will take a lead in:

- Training and guiding the young person to carry out the tasks and activities that are outlined in the workplan.
- Providing constructive feedback, praise and recognition.
- Providing appropriate levels of autonomy and empowerment.
- Providing support if they are experiencing problems

2. Setting-up work placements

Developing skills as a supervisor/ mentor

As you may not have experience of working with and managing young people it is important to ensure you have the skills and knowledge to carry out your role effectively and are supported to develop your skills, if required. This includes interviewing, supervisory and mentoring skills.

NHS Lothian held a mentorship training session for all mentors and produced guidance documents for supervisors/mentors as part of their Facilities Academy Certificate of Work Readiness programme. The pack included information about the purpose and structure of the Certificate, recruitment and selection processes, and supporting the young person in the workplace. A copy of the Guidance Pack is available [here](#).

The buddy

You may want to consider appointing a separate 'buddy' who can help the young person informally to navigate the workplace.

A buddy can offer valuable support to the young person - they 'look after' them during their placement, check how things are going, take them to lunch, help them with any questions.

For this role, try to choose a staff member who is naturally helpful, good with people and has the desire to help a young person in their working life.

This is a development opportunity for existing staff and you may need to provide some additional training for them to undertake this role.

Identifying areas and activities for work placements

It is good practice to produce a workplan to identify the tasks and activities the young person will carry out during their work placement. The activities the young person will carry out should reflect a 'real' job to ensure:

- they provide relevant and appropriate experience towards the **Certificate of Work Readiness**
- the young person has a positive experience of the world of work.
- the young person can suggest fresh ways to approach routine tasks that can bring efficiencies to the organisation

NHS Education for Scotland identified two administrative roles – one placement was based in the HR Department and the other in the Workforce Directorate. Colleagues worked together to identify work that would provide the young people with a range of experiences – for example, providing committee support, organising training events and conferences, and updating web sites.

2. Setting-up work placements

You should also consider what personal protective equipment (PPE) and other equipment the young person will need in his/her role. You could also explore the possibility of teams and/or departments jointly delivering the programme. This could include delivering a 'common' induction to the young people that includes information on NHSScotland values, health and safety and other Board policies and procedures.

It is important to involve and get support from staff side and to ensure that they understand the aims, purpose, content and assessment of the work placement as part of the Certificate of Work Readiness.

Identifying and appointing a learning provider

SDS will support you to find a suitable learning provider. They will advise you about approved providers in your area and help you to identify the most appropriate one for your needs. They will then contact the learning provider on your behalf and will agree funding arrangements with them directly. The learning provider will contact you to discuss your requirements.

Alternatively, if you prefer to work with a particular learning provider you should discuss with them if they are registered to deliver the [Certificate of Work Readiness](#). If they are not a registered provider, SDS will be able to offer support and advice in relation to registration processes.

If your Board wishes to apply to register to deliver the Certificate of Work Readiness internally, you should discuss this with SDS.

Further information is available from SDS's **Employer Helpline** on **0800 783 6000**.



2. Setting-up work placements

Agreeing the Certificate of Work Readiness programme with the learning provider

You should meet with the learning provider to discuss and agree planning and delivery details of the [Certificate of Work Readiness](#).

This will include:

- The workplan and your expectations of the young person including activities, attendance, timekeeping, attitudes and behaviours.
- Health and safety including any personal protective equipment (PPE) and other equipment that is needed. The learning provider may wish to undertake a health and safety inspection of the workplace.
- Arrangements for supporting the young person at each stage of the work placement. The learning provider will support you to complete the [Employer Scorecard](#) which is used for this purpose. SDS recommends that the employer also uses the [Employer Scorecard](#) for regular review and reflection with the young person.
- the course timetable and placement start date.
- both partners agreeing the delivery of the learning programme which will help to ensure consistency and reduce duplication. The learning that is provided by you should include mandatory induction requirements and job-specific and employability skills.

NHS Lothian's internal learning programme for the Facilities Academy Certificate of Work Readiness programme included:

- corporate induction
- advanced food hygiene
- communication
- first aid
- infection control
- hand hygiene
- team work
- values
- violence and aggression overview
- vulnerable adults
- literacy life skills
- overview of facilities roles
- application process
- balancing a budget
- HR policy overview, and
- recruitment processes and interview skills.



2. Setting-up work placements

Recruiting young people to the Certificate of Work Readiness programme


The learning provider will oversee the recruitment process which will involve working with Jobcentre Plus and SDS to recruit young people to the [Certificate of Work Readiness](#).

As the employer, you will be responsible for selecting young people identified by the partners for your work placements.

Before the interview


Before starting the recruitment process, you should meet with the learning provider to agree roles, responsibilities and processes in relation to:

- shortlisting applicants
- scheduling interviews
- communicating information to the young people
- preparing for and participating in interview panels.



As part of their Facilities Academy Certificate of Work Readiness Programme, NHS Lothian created a [Chairperson Interview Checklist](#) which covers pre-interview, during interview and after interview tasks.

It is important to ensure that all members of the interview panel have the appropriate knowledge and skills to recruit and select young people. SDS shows the kind of preparation a young person would undertake for a work placement, for example '[My Interview](#)'.



In NHS Education for Scotland's (NES's) the recruitment and selection process was taken forward by a member of staff who had experience of recruiting young people with no previous work experience. The recruitment panel was guided towards using open questions which related to previous experience, not previous work experience. The panel met beforehand to agree questions that they would ask the applicants.

2. Setting-up work placements

Most young people will not have much, if any, interview experience. As they may also lack self-confidence, a supportive interview approach may help to bring out information about their skills and attributes. This could be an informal interview about the young person's employability skills, their potential and enthusiasm, rather than focusing only on academic qualifications and technical requirements.

After the interview

As the employer, you will be responsible for deciding which applicants are suitable for the work placements.

The learning provider should take the lead in following up with the young people post-interview to advise them of the outcome. The learning provider will enrol the young person onto the programme and prepare him/her for the placement over two/three weeks before the placement starts. A representative of the learning provider might also accompany the young person on their first day of the workplace placement.

Embedding evaluation

Evaluation processes can be used to help your Board identify benefits and limitations of the Certificate of Work Readiness programme and to inform future activity. NHS Education for Scotland provides online guidance and support for evaluation planning at [Testing for the Best](#).

3. During the work placement



3. During the work placement

This section provides guidance about supporting and mentoring the young person and delivering the learning programme in partnership with the learning provider.

You have already:

- agreed the activities and expectations of the young person
- agreed the content and timetable of the programme
- identified staff to coordinate, supervise/mentor and buddy

Working with the learning provider

It is essential that you keep in regular contact with the learning provider during the work placement. This will help to ensure that the young person has a positive experience of the world of work and that any issues are dealt with as they arise.

The learning provider will ensure that the young person is fully prepared to undertake the work placement. This will include providing the young person with information on what is expected of them and the activities and tasks that they will carry out during their placement.

At this stage, the learning provider will have shown you how to use the [Employer Scorecard](#).

The learning provider should visit the young person at least twice during their placement to assess their learning. They should also meet with the supervisor/mentor to determine the young person's progress.

NHS Lothian's co-ordinator maintained regular contact with the young people and the mentors which, in turn, increased the young people's confidence in the employer.



Induction to the work placement

For most young people, a work placement will be a very new experience. It is important that the young person receives an introduction to your organisation and the workplace. A well-designed induction process will make the young person feel valued and it can make the transition into the world of work a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone.

It is very important to manage the young person's expectations and to ensure that they have a realistic understanding of their role in the organisation. The induction should provide an opportunity for you to get to know the young person and provide an opportunity for them to ask questions.

3. During the work placement

It should also include:

- An introduction to the organisation/department/team and a tour of the facilities, including work areas.
- Clear information about workplace culture and expectations, including any understood norms in relation to timekeeping, communication with others, behaviour, dress code and phone use.
- Information on health and safety, and other relevant policies and procedures.
- An introduction to the staff member who will be supervising and mentoring them during their work placement.
- A clear outline of your expectations, including a discussion about the activities and tasks they will be carrying out and the skills they will develop.
- Providing them with any personal protective equipment (PPE) or other equipment they need to carry out the work.

Support through the work placement

As young people on work placements are new to the world of work, it is essential that they are managed and mentored in a very supportive way. This will help them to develop more quickly in terms of building self-confidence and will show them that they can play a positive role in the world of work.

Supervisors/mentors play a key role in supporting and developing the young person. In addition to ensuring a member of staff is supervising/mentoring the young person during their work placement, you could also consider appointing a separate 'buddy'. More information about these roles is available in setting up work placements.

Due to young person's inexperience in the workplace it is essential that supervisors/mentors continue to reinforce topics covered in induction throughout the placement.

Reviewing progress

The supervisor/mentor will monitor the young person's behaviour, attitude, attendance and timekeeping during their work placement.

It is essential that regular review and reflection discussions are held with the young person – either weekly or fortnightly – so that any issues can be discussed and addressed to maximise the young person's learning from the placement.

3. During the work placement

The learning provider will show you how to review progress by using the [Employer Scorecard](#), and will support you when required.

Giving feedback

Giving constructive, honest and supportive feedback will encourage the young person to reflect on their performance, to value their achievements and to identify areas for improvement.

It may be helpful to ask the young person to use [Appendix 5 of SQA's Arrangements Document](#) to keep a record of their own progress to help consolidate their learning and identify any areas for development.

Absence

In the event that the young person is off sick during the work placement, it is good practice to conduct a 'back to work' interview on their return. This will give them experience of what would happen in a real work situation.

Dealing with problems

It is essential that supervisors/mentors/buddies know where to get support should any problems arise during the work placement.

This might include the young person not turning up to the workplace, not following policies and procedures or having problems with benefits.

It is helpful to agree who will be responsible for dealing with such issues in the first instance.

Links with Jobcentre Plus

The work placement should not affect any benefits that the young person is receiving from Jobcentre Plus.

However, whilst on the placement the young person may need to discuss issues relating to benefits. You should advise them to contact their adviser at Job Centre Plus.

You may also want to inform the learning provider that the young person is having issues with their benefits.

4. After the work placement



4. After the work placement

This section explains what will happen at the end of the work placement. At this stage, as the supervisor/mentor, you will have worked with the provider to deliver the learning programme to the young person and provided the appropriate support and mentoring in the workplace.

Assessing performance in the work placement

You will be supported by the learning provider to assess the young person's performance and their work-readiness and to complete the assessment paperwork using the [Employer Scorecard](#).

At this stage, you should also have a final review discussion with the young person to evaluate the work placement and to get their feedback on their experience.

The learning provider will verify if the young person has gained the underpinning knowledge and skills for the [Certificate of Work Readiness](#) and, if successful, SQA will award the qualification.



Next steps

Approximately three weeks before the end of the work placement, you should have started discussions with SDS and the young person in relation to 'next steps'.

It would be helpful for the young person to produce a detailed 'summary of experience' (with your support if necessary) to help them focus on their key achievements and learning, update their CV and promote themselves to potential employers.

This summary might include details of what the young person did during their work placement and how they performed their tasks. This information can help you to provide a reference for the young person, if required. Giving the young person a reference plays an important part in informing potential employers about the young person's employability skills.

You might want to advise the young person of relevant internal vacancies and how they should go about applying for a job.

SDS and Jobcentre Plus will support the young person to identify new opportunities, if appropriate.

5. Key Resources



5. Key Resources

a) Information about the Certificate of Work Readiness:

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/64560.html>

b) The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF):

<http://www.scqf.org.uk/features/Framework.htm>

c) Information about the Certificate of Work Readiness:

<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/certificate-of-work-readiness/>

d) SQA Arrangements Document for Certificate of Work Readiness:

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Skills_Development_Scotland_customised_unitforSQA.pdf

e) Skills for Health resources:

<http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/developing-your-organisations-talent/work-experience-in-the-health-sector/>

f) Information about the Employability Fund

<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/for-training-providers/employability-fund/>

g) Employer Scorecard

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Skills_Development_Scotland_customised_unitforSQA.pdf

h) Interview information for young people

<http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/section/interviews>

i) Resources for evaluating education and training

<http://www.test4best.scot.nhs.uk/>

Education Scotland

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/worldofworkonline/about/learningandteaching/value.asp>

Helpline

SDS's Employer Helpline: **0800 783 6000**

