

# apprenticeship FRAMEWORK

## Communication Support (Wales)

### IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION FOR ALL APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 14 OCTOBER 2016

Modifications to SASW came into effect on 14 October 2016. These changes relate to the **Essential Skills and Employer Rights and Responsibilities** requirements of a framework and they **ONLY** apply to new Apprenticeship starts on, or after, 14th October. Apprenticeship starts before this date must continue to meet the 2013 SASW requirements for Essential Skills and Employer Rights and Responsibilities.

For more details of the changes and how they will affect new apprenticeship starts, please read the following preface page to the framework document. NB: Please check the "Revising a Framework" section for information on any additional changes that may have been made to this framework.

### Latest framework version?

For any previous versions of this framework: [www.acwcerts.co.uk/framework\\_library](http://www.acwcerts.co.uk/framework_library)

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# Communication Support (Wales)

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# Framework information

## Information on the Issuing Authority for this framework:

Instructus

The Apprenticeship sector for occupations in air conditioning, building services engineering, business and administration, cleaning, customer service, digital/information technology, electro technical, electrical and electronic servicing, enterprise and business support, facilities management, heating and ventilating, housing, human resources and recruitment, industrial relations, leadership and management, marketing and sales (also includes contact centres and third sector), plumbing, property and refrigeration.

Issue number: 2	This framework includes:
Framework ID: FR03341	Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 4-7 <input type="checkbox"/>
Date this framework is to be reviewed by: DD/MM/YYYY	This framework is for use in: Wales

## Short description

The Level 3 Communication Support apprenticeship is designed to meet the skills needs of educational establishments in the education of D/deaf learners. Whereas apprentices will gain a broad skillset through this apprenticeship, there is also a sharp focus on the individualised support of D/deaf learners' needs. The job role that is supported through this apprenticeship is that of communication support worker (CSW). CSWs work as part of a team, and in collaboration with a range of professionals, in the support of the education of D'deaf learnersw in a variety of educational settings.

# Contact information

## Proposer of this framework

This framework is published by Skills CFA. Employers, training providers, colleges and awarding organisations fed into the development of the apprenticeship and the qualifications. Employer input was collected through online consultations and steering group meetings which gathered the views of a wide range of individuals and organisations.

## Developer of this framework

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# Revising a framework

## Why this framework is being revised

This framework was revised by Skills CFA in March 2015 in order to insert a qualification number into the framework, as detailed below.

## Summary of changes made to this framework

This framework was revised by Skills CFA in March 2015 in order to insert the Diploma qualification number into the framework:

- Agored Cymru Level 3 Diploma in Communication Support (QCF) - 601/5810/4

## Qualifications removed

None

## Qualifications added

None

## Qualifications that have been extended

None

# Purpose of this framework

## Summary of the purpose of the framework

The first qualifications for Communication Support Workers (CSW) came about in the late 1980s. However, since then there has been continual confusion and misapprehension concerning the role. The role of the CSO is multi-faceted and has been historically difficult to delineate. The result of this has been a tendency for qualification provision that does not fully support the skills and knowledge necessary for the occupation. This apprenticeship represents a structured programme of training for the role of Communication Support Worker that can serve to give it greater definition and aim towards a greater degree of professionalisation in the area.

The role of the CSW is to use a variety of support strategies and communication modes in order to enable communication based on the needs and preferences of individual deaf learners. In doing so, they liaise with a range of other professionals such as Teachers of the Deaf, audiologists, teachers, lecturers and other CSWs. As such it is essential that CSWs should establish strong professional relationships with their colleagues and all others involved in educational settings.

The CSW is an important part of a team of professionals who are all 'educators'; this is how they should be viewed rather than as interpreters. In this way they are constituent of a collective educational team with a responsibility towards the education of individual D/deaf learners in all different types of educational settings, facilitating access to the curriculum and the wider learning environment and meeting their needs wherever possible. In addition to this, the CSW plays an important role in the fostering of a positive D/deaf image and self-esteem.

Communication Support Workers are multi-skilled, adaptable professionals able to change role to suit an individual D/deaf learner's shifting requirements. In general the role of CSWs is to help D/deaf people to communicate in a range of environments, including schools, colleges, universities and adult education centres. Their role typically includes such things as:

- supporting people by working between spoken English and British Sign Language (BSL), with some notetaking and lipspeaking
- helping learners to understand and produce written material
- adapting learning materials and work-related materials to make them easier to understand
- enabling peer interactions
- implementing, reviewing and adapting communication strategies for changing communication requirements
- providing deaf awareness training for other staff and peer groups
- performing the function of an Oral Language Modifier in relation to assessments - this is

regulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

A CSW needs to have role flexibility due to the number, and wide variety of tasks that they are required to perform. However, this role flexibility should not be at the cost of skills levels in key areas, eg working between BSL and English, notetaking etc. The introduction of this apprenticeship will mean that there is a stipulation of the same basic standards of performance and lead to qualified and competent CSWs practicing within a variety of educational settings. The apprenticeship will serve to define this occupation as a valid job role, as well as creating a basic standard of performance for the occupation.

In addition to this, the apprenticeship will help to distinguish those practitioners who are qualified to perform their role from those who are not so as to guard against individuals being engaged as a CSW but without either the knowledge or skills necessary to perform the role.

## **Aims and objectives of this framework (Wales)**

The aim of this apprenticeship is to provide all different types of educational establishments operating in Wales with a high-quality, nationally-recognised programme which will attract new talent into the sector and allow them to gain the skills and knowledge to enable them to practice as a communication support worker. The development of an apprenticeship for CSWs will help to create clarity around the role of the CSW and raise the standard of performance.

The objectives of this apprenticeship are to:

- build a competent workforce of communication support workers who can respond to the needs of D/deaf learners
- provide an appropriate benchmark for competent practice in communication support
- extend the professionalisation of communication support as an occupation
- provide apprentices with the skills, knowledge and experience needed to undertake communication support roles in a range of educational settings
- provide apprentices with an opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge and experience they will need to progress to roles with additional responsibilities and onto further and higher education, if they wish to do so
- distinguish trained personnel who are able to carry out the role of a communication support worker competently, from those who are not qualified to do so.

# Entry conditions for this framework

Due to the nature of the job role that is undertaken by a communication support worker, it is essential that all apprentices as a minimum possess the following:

- achievement of QCF Awards, Certificates or Diplomas at Level 2 in British Sign Language (BSL) or equivalent.

It is also recommended that during the apprenticeship, the apprentice should attain Level 3 in BSL.

Providers and employers are encouraged to accept appropriate alternatives to qualifications when entering on to this apprenticeship to ensure equality of access for people with different learning styles. These alternatives include volunteering, employment, portfolios of evidence and completion of non-accredited courses. Potential apprentices must be able to demonstrate the appropriate level of language skills in both their target and source languages.

Successful recruitment practices will ensure that higher apprentices with the potential to complete the apprenticeship are placed on the programme.

Entrants come from a diverse range of backgrounds and have a range of experience, age, personal achievements and, in some cases, prior qualifications and awards which may count towards achievement of the apprenticeship.

## **Initial Assessment**

Initial assessment must be used to ensure that applicants have a fair opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Learning programmes can then be tailored to meet a range of abilities and to recognise prior knowledge and experience. Whilst the framework does not prescribe the use of any particular assessment tools, those used must be fit for purpose in terms of assessing the key enterprising skills and mindset required. 'Competence-based' interview approaches, where the apprentice can demonstrate enterprising and innovative behaviours, will be highly appropriate.

Learning programmes can then be tailored to meet a range of abilities and skills and to recognise prior knowledge and experience. This will be important given the diversity of potential entrants.

## **Rules to avoid repeating qualifications**

Processes exist to make sure that applicants with prior knowledge, qualifications and experience are not disadvantaged by having to repeat learning. Training providers and awarding organisations will be able to advise on the current rules for accrediting prior learning and recognising prior experience.



## 1. Essential Skills Wales.

- If applicants already have GCSEs in English, mathematics and/or information and communications technology (ICT) they must still do Essential Skills Wales at the relevant level, as these are new qualifications and proxies do not exist
- Key Skills qualifications can be accepted as alternatives to Essential Skills Wales qualifications, providing the Key Skills Certificate(s) attained are at the same level(s) as those specified for the Essential Skills Wales qualifications
- Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualifications achieved as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) can be accepted. However, when applying for an apprenticeship completion certificate, the WBQ certificate must clearly state the title(s) and level(s) of the ESW achieved, as the Welsh Baccalaureate certificate does not provide this specific evidence

## 2. Prior experience.

- Applicants already working in the sector will be able to have their prior experience recognised by the Awarding Organisation and this will count towards the combined qualification in this framework.

# Level 3

Title for this framework at level 3

## Communication Support

Pathways for the framework at level 3:

Pathway 1:                      Communication Support

# Level 3, Pathway 1: Communication Support

## Description of this pathway

### Communication Support

Total minimum credit value for this pathway: 72 credits

- 54Credits for the combined qualification
- 18 for Essential Skills Wales Communication, Application of Number and ICT

## Entry requirements for this pathway in addition to the framework entry requirements

There are no entry requirements for this pathway in addition to the general framework entry requirements.

Job title(s)	Job role(s)
Communication Support Worker	Communication support workers support D/deaf learners. The role involves assisting the communication of D/deaf learners; working between spoken English and British Sign Language (BSL); notetaking; lipspeaking; helping learners understand and produce written material; and adapting learning materials.

# Qualifications

Competence qualifications available to this pathway

N/A

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Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway

N/A

## Combined qualifications available to this pathway

### B1 – Level 3 Diploma in Communication Support

No.	Ref no.	Awarding organisation	Credit value	Guided learning hours	UCAS points value
B1a	601/5810/4	Agored Cymru	54	366	N/A

## Relationship between competence and knowledge qualifications

The Level 3 Diploma in Communication Support includes both competence and knowledge units. Learners must complete a minimum of 54 credits, all from mandatory units.

The requirement for at least 10 credits on the QCF for the knowledge element and 10 credits for the competence element will be completed through the mandatory units. By completing the following mandatory units the apprentice will achieve 25 credits for competence and 29 credits for knowledge:

- Language Acquisition and development theory (6 credits knowledge)
- Accessible language for D/deaf people (6 credits competence; 6 credits knowledge)
- Working with signed and spoken languages (4 credits competence; 1 credit knowledge)
- Deaf Awareness for communication support practice (8 credits knowledge)
- Professional behaviour in communication support practice (3 credits competence; 2 credits knowledge)
- Communication support work in practice (7 credits competence; 2 credits knowledge)
- Assessment Arrangements for D/deaf Learners (2 credits competence; 2 credits knowledge)
- Manual note taking for D/deaf and disabled people (3 credits competence; 2 credits knowledge)

As part of the evidence requirements for Apprenticeship Completion certification, a copy of a completed, current Apprentice certificate claim form must be uploaded to ACW (<http://acwcerts.co.uk>).

Please note: those who have already achieved competence and/or knowledge qualifications prior to this Apprenticeship must select options which will equip them with new skills and prior

to this Apprenticeship must select options which will equip them with new skills and learning.

# Essential Skills

An apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement the expected achievement levels of Essential Skills in Communication and the Application of Number, and Digital Literacy (where required).

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS WALES

Communication	Min.Level 2	Credit Value 6
Application of Number	Min.Level 2	Credit Value 6
IT	Min.Level 2	Credit Value 6

For the current list of acceptable proxy qualifications and appropriate minimum grade/level requirements, please refer to the most recent version of SASW on the gov.wales website. Additional guidance materials can be found on the Knowledge Base section of the ACW website.



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# Progression routes into and from this pathway

## Progression into the Communication Support Apprenticeship

Progression into this higher apprenticeship in Translation may be from a number of routes due to the varying backgrounds, past academic and work related experiences. Such routes will include having:

- achieved QCF Certificates or Diplomas at Level 2 in BSL
- completed the Level 2 Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools apprenticeship
- achieved GCSEs or A-Levels
- achieved a Welsh Baccalaureate, including a pass in the Core
- worked in learning support roles
- carried out volunteering work with D/deaf learners.

Learners will need to meet the framework entry requirements to progress into the Higher Apprenticeship in Translation.

## Progression from the Communication Support Apprenticeship

Apprentices can progress onto:

- BSL qualifications at Level 4 and above
- communication support worker team leader
- qualifications to qualify as a Teacher of the Deaf
- the Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship in Interpreting and Translation
- higher education translation or language qualifications
- with additional qualifications and experience apprentices will be able to progress their careers to more senior roles.

## UCAS points for this pathway:

*(No requirement specified)*

# Employee rights and responsibilities

Please note that for Apprenticeship starts from 14/10/2016 onwards ERR is no longer a **mandatory** requirement in all frameworks.

However, it may still be included in some frameworks and where it is not explicitly stated that ERR is not a requirement then confirmation of an Apprentice's ERR achievement will still remain a requirement for Apprenticeship certification purposes.

Is ERR a requirement for this framework?   **YES**   ☒   **NO**   ☐

## Delivery and assessment

[Framework Developer to complete with relevant info ]

*The remaining sections apply to all levels and pathways within this framework.*

# How equality and diversity will be met

The identification of reliable information in relation to equality and diversity within the communication support occupations is problematic. However, it is possible to make certain inferences from the nature of the job role. Communication support workers operate in a variety of different educational settings, the majority of which operate within traditional term-times. This means that the occupation is favourable for those who wish to balance child-care responsibilities with employment and the establishment of a career pathway.

Historically there has been a lack of definition regarding the role of the communication support worker. This has led to incidences of people operating within roles whilst not being qualified to do so. The development of this apprenticeship can serve to create definition in regards to the occupation and create a standard against which practice can be judged. This means that through this apprenticeship, the occupation can be opened up to many different groups of individuals who may not previously have seen communication support as a viable career path.

This apprenticeship will support the development of interpreting and translation skills across all age groups and sexes by providing a new entry route into interpreting and translation roles, with no barriers to entry.

Apprenticeships are perceived as a vital route to encouraging and facilitating talent in a diverse set of individuals. Entry conditions to this apprenticeship do not discriminate against any individuals, with the apprenticeship being open and accessible to all potential apprentices provided that they meet the general entry requirements. Mentoring is also promoted within the apprenticeship to provide additional support and increase the chances of apprentices staying. Training providers and employers must also comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to and promotion within the profession, using the protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation.

Download the guidance on the Equality Act [here](#).

Skills CFA will monitor take up and achievement of all Apprenticeships and take steps to

address any barriers to take up and achievement.



# On and off the job training

## Summary of on- and off-the-job training

Training time for the Communication Support Apprenticeship programmes is split into off-the-job training hours and on-the-job training hours, as described below.

Total on-the-job and off-the-job training hours is as follows:

- Level 3 Communication Support - 674 hours

## Off-the-job training

Level 3 Communication Support Apprenticeship

The total off-the-job training for the Management Apprenticeship is **237 hours**, made up as follows:

- 60 hours for Essential Skills Wales (20 hours per skill)
- 129 hours (minimum) associated with the competence and knowledge element of the combined qualification
- 48 hours of off-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

### How this requirement will be met

Training hours delivered under an Apprenticeship Agreement may vary depending on the previous experience and attainment of the apprentice.

The amount of off-the-job training required to complete the apprenticeship under the Apprenticeship Agreement may then be reduced accordingly, provided the total number of off-the-job hours for this framework can be verified for apprenticeship certification.

### Previous attainment

Where a learner enters an apprenticeship agreement having previously attained parts or all of the relevant qualifications, this prior learning needs to be recognised using either QCF credit transfer for achievements within the QCF; or through recording certificated learning outside of the QCF, for example Principal Learning qualifications.

For apprentices who have already achieved the relevant qualifications, they must have been certificated within five years of applying for the apprenticeship certificate.

### Previous experience

Where a learner enters an Apprenticeship Agreement with previous work-related experience, this prior learning needs to be recognised [see QCF Guidance on Claiming Credit for further details]. To count towards Apprenticeship certification, previous experience must be recorded using the appropriate Awarding Organisation's CQFW 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) procedures and the hours recorded may then count towards the off-the-job hours required to complete the apprenticeship.

For apprentices with prior uncertificated learning experience, the off-the-job learning must have been acquired within five years of application for the apprenticeship certificate or have been continuously employed in the relevant job role in the industry for three years duration.

Off-the-job training needs to:

- be planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager;
- allow access as and when required by the apprentice either to a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager;
- be delivered during contracted working hours;
- be delivered through one or more of the following methods: individual and group teaching, e-learning, distance learning, coaching; mentoring, feedback and assessment; collaborative/networked learning with peers, guided study and induction.

Off-the-job training must be formally recorded, either in a diary, workbook, portfolio, or be verified by attendance records. This evidence needs to be checked and signed by the assessor and employer.

Evidence of off the job hours

The Apprenticeship Certificate Claim Form requires apprentices to acknowledge that they have received the minimum required levels of on the job and off the job training, as set out in the apprenticeship framework document. No other evidence is required to be uploaded to ACW.

All Welsh apprenticeship certificates must be claimed via the ACW (Apprenticeship Certification Wales) online system. This online system, which went live in July 2013, is operated by Skills CFA on behalf of the Federation For Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS).

In order to claim a Welsh apprenticeship certificate you must register on ACW via this link - [http://acwcerts.co.uk/register\\_centre](http://acwcerts.co.uk/register_centre) .

## On-the-job training

### Level 3 Communication Support Apprenticeship

The total on-the-job training for the Communication Support Apprenticeship is 437 hours, made up as follows:

- 120 hours for Essential Skills Wales (40 hours per skill)
- 257 hours (minimum) associated with the competence and knowledge element of the combined qualification
- 60 hours of on-the-job coaching and mentoring to support the apprentice

## How this requirement will be met

On-the job training is defined as skills, knowledge and competence gained within normal work

duties.

These hours may vary depending on previous experience and attainment of the apprentice. Where a learner enters an Apprenticeship Agreement having previously attained or acquired the appropriate competencies or knowledge, this prior learning needs to be recognised and documented using the relevant QCF credit transfer, QCF exemption or RPL procedures (as off-the-job above). The amount of on-the-job training required to complete the apprenticeship under the Apprenticeship Agreement may then be reduced accordingly, provided the total number of on-the-job hours for this framework can be verified for apprenticeship certification.

Apprentices who commence training under a new Apprenticeship Agreement with a new employer may bring a range of prior experience with them. When an apprentice can claim 25% or more hours towards the on-the-job framework total through prior learning acquired from previous full-time education, employment or other vocational programmes, then the apprentice's learning programme should include 'customisation'. Training providers are encouraged to identify additional on-the-job training programmes that customise the learning to the new workplace. Customisation programmes may include:

- selecting appropriate additional Unit(s) from QCF qualifications, or relevant units recognised as Quality Assured Lifelong Learning [QALL] through a CQFW recognised body
- following Essential Skills at a level higher than that specified in the framework
- including one or more Wider Key Skills or other competency-based qualifications/units relevant to the workplace.

For apprentices who have already achieved the relevant qualifications, they must have been certificated within 5 years from the date of application for the foundation apprenticeship/apprenticeship certificate or have been continuously employed in the industry for three years. Job roles within Management & Team Leading require a thorough level of technical competence and knowledge, which will be undertaken through work-based training, practice and experience.

On-the-job learning must be formally recorded, either in a diary, workbook, portfolio, or be verified by attendance records. This evidence needs to be checked and signed by the learner and assessor.

### **Evidence of on the job training hours**

The Apprenticeship Certificate Claim Form requires apprentices to acknowledge that they have received the minimum required levels of on the job and off the job training, as set out in the apprenticeship framework document. No other evidence is required to be uploaded to ACW. All Welsh apprenticeship certificates must be claimed via the ACW (Apprenticeship Certification Wales) online system. This online system, which went live in July 2013, is operated by Skills CFA on behalf of the Federation For Industry Sector Skills and Standards

In order to claim a Welsh apprenticeship certificate you must register on ACW via this link -[http://acwcerts.co.uk/register\\_centre](http://acwcerts.co.uk/register_centre) .



# Wider key skills assessment and recognition

While Wider Key Skills are not a **mandatory** part of the framework, training providers are encouraged to provide apprentices the opportunity to achieve them.

For this framework, there are natural opportunities for Wider Key Skills to be embedded within the mandatory units of the following qualifications:

<div>Enter Qualification Names</div>
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## Improving own learning and performance

Give examples - signpost to specific units in framework qualifications that would meet these requirements

## Working with others

Give examples - signpost to specific units in framework qualifications that would meet these requirements

## Problem solving

Give examples - signpost to specific units in framework qualifications that would meet these requirements

# apprenticeship FRAMEWORK

For more information visit-  
[www.acwcerts.co.uk/framework\\_library](http://www.acwcerts.co.uk/framework_library)