



CASE STUDY

Title: Using Health & Social Care NOS in Learning and Development Programmes

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT) was formed in 1996. It consists of the Rhondda Valley, Cynon Valley and Taff Ely, and serves a population of about 234,410. The Council arranges for Social Care services to be provided from both internal and external providers.

The Assessment Centre has been in operation for around 15 years and has an excellent juxtaposition within the Council alongside operational services. The Assessment Centre also works with commissioned external Social Care Organisations. The Centre sits in the Community and Children's Services Directorate of the Council and serves both Adult and Children's services.

The Centre supports in excess of 120 learners at any one time across the range of qualifications offered. In addition, the Centre offers smaller bite size learning opportunities for continual professional development of the workforce.

The Centre has a range of peripatetic, work based and independent assessors available to employ its services.

Use of national Occupational Standards (NOS)

NOS are regarded as an important resource in developing learning programmes in the area of Health and Social Care, in particular the NOS for Leadership for Health & Social Care Services; H&SC Levels 2, 3 (Children's and Adults routes).

The main users of these NOS are Assessment Centre managers, Lead Internal Quality Assurers and Assessors who use the NOS for purposes such as:

For QCF programmes

- to plan and deliver underpinning knowledge programmes for the Health & Social Care Diplomas
- to negotiate the content of the programmes with facilitators
- to discuss the breadth and depth of the criteria with learners, and
- as part of the quality assurance process, to assist assessors to clarify requirements against Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

They are seen as useful in standardisation activities and also for developing assessor CPD activities.

Testimony from users:

"Since the QCF Diplomas have been in existence, NOS became less used. However, we have consciously included them throughout our work to ensure high quality qualifications are achieved".

“We have encouraged their use by learners and managers, by emphasising that they are the agreed National **Occupational** Standards”

Benefits

There are important benefits to be derived from using the national occupational standards. They

- help enhance staff commitment to providing the best service possible, to learners and individuals.
- assist people to understand that the standards are not there just as a basis for the qualification, but that they are the benchmarks for how employees should be operating at all times. And
- in the area of assessment, they help in improving and maintaining practice; sharing good practice and ideas and drafting assessor guidance for specialist units
- help assessors, learners and quality assurers to focus on the requirements

The future

The VQ centre is keen to ensure that NOS will continue to be used in their day to day work and that they can contribute to disseminating best practice to wider groups and fora across regions /Wales.

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