Highfield Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship Assessment for FA0007 Health and Social Care

Assessment Specification



© 2026 Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance Limited

Highfield Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship Assessment for FA0007 Health and Social Care

Assessment Specification

Contents

Please click on the headings below to navigate to the associated section of the assessment specification.

Introduction 4

Gateway to completion 8

The Health and Social Care foundation apprenticeship 9

Assessing AO1 – knowledge test and question and answer 21

Assessing AO2 and AO3 – portfolio of evidence 23

Grading 26

Versions:

FA0007 / v1.1

FAHSC v1.0

How to use this assessment specification

Welcome to the Highfield Assessment Specification for the Health and Social Care foundation apprenticeship.

Highfield is an independent awarding organisation that has been approved to assess and quality assure the Level 2 Health and Social Care foundation apprenticeship.

The assessment specification is designed to outline all you need to know about the assessments for this foundation apprenticeship and will also provide an overview of the delivery requirements.

Highfield also offers the Highfield Level 2 Health and Social Care Foundation Apprenti-kit, a comprehensive learning resource, designed to be used on-programme.

For more information, please go to the Highfield Products website. Please note that the use of this learning resource is not a prerequisite for apprentices undertaking the Health and Social Care foundation apprenticeship.

Introduction

Standard overview

Health and care support assistants work in a range of health and care settings, for example in a care home, hospital, general practice, as part of a community team and in individuals' homes where their wider team may include workers from both health and social care.

The broad purpose is to provide high-quality and compassionate care and support to individuals. Daily duties will vary dependent on where they work and whether their work is focused on supporting healthcare professionals in providing clinical healthcare or in providing personal care and support in adult social care.

Off-the-job training

This foundation apprenticeship requires a minimum 187 hours off-the-job learning. Upon successful completion, the apprentice will be competent in the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in this standard. Someone who completes some or all of this content will be part-way through a journey to a more specialist occupation. Taking another apprenticeship after this one is one way of progressing. More information about the main occupations involved can be found via the Skills England website.

Entry requirements

The apprentice must normally be age 16 to 21 at the start of their apprenticeship. Exceptions to this are set out in the Department for Education Apprenticeship Funding Rules.

English and maths qualifications

Apprentices must follow the English and maths formal qualification requirements as set out in the Department for Education Apprenticeship funding rules.

Mandatory qualification

There are no mandatory qualifications or license to practice requirements for this occupation.

Mapping to occupational standards

Coverage of each knowledge and skill statement must include each and every occupation it is mapped to, unless expressly stated otherwise. For instance, if skill S1 is mapped to occupation 1 and occupation 2, then the range of coverage must include elements of both 1 and 2 so the apprentice benefits from a broad experience. Competence is to the level described by this foundation apprenticeship's knowledge and skills and not the often higher level of the mapped occupations. Coverage will be a blend of on and off-the-job learning. More information can be found within the knowledge and skills coverage document on the Skills England website.

Assessment roadmap

There is no stipulated order of assessment methods. Apprentices may be assessed at appropriate points (or milestones) throughout their foundation apprenticeship. This will be agreed between the apprentice, provider and/or employer.

If the knowledge and skills mapped to AO1 are required to access the workplace, this assessment should happen early in the programme.

Highfield's approach to assessing this standard is:

- Knowledge Test (AO1 Knowledge statements)
- Question and Answer (AO1 Skill statements)
- Practical Assessment – Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) (AO2/AO3)

In order to take the assessments, the apprentice must be registered with Highfield.

If you have any questions regarding these assessment components, please contact your Highfield customer engagement team.

Assessor and internal quality assurance (IQA) guidance

Assessors

Assessors for this apprenticeship **must** meet the following:

- have knowledge of the subject. Examples to demonstrate subject knowledge include, but are not limited to:
    - a current CV detailing sector experience
    - an up-to-date record of continuous professional development relevant to the sector
    - holding a qualification at the same level or above as the apprenticeship being assessed

- possess or be working towards a recognised assessor qualification. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
    - A1 Assess Candidate Performance Using a Range of Methods and A2 Assessing Candidates' Performance through Observation
    - D32 Assess Learner Performance and D33 Assess Learner Using Different Sources of Evidence

IQA

Internal quality assurers for this apprenticeship **must** meet the following:

- have knowledge of the subject. Examples to demonstrate subject knowledge include, but are not limited to:
    - a current CV detailing sector experience
    - an up-to-date record of continuous professional development relevant to the sector
    - holding a qualification at the same level or above as the apprenticeship being assessed
- possess or be working towards a recognised internal quality assurance qualification. For example:
    - Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (RQF)
    - Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice (RQF)
    - D34 or V1 Verifier Awards

It is **recommended** that IQAs hold an assessing qualification.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

It is recommended that staff assessing and quality assuring this apprenticeship are supported to maintain up-to-date sector knowledge, including best practices and relevant legislative changes. CPD records can provide clear evidence of this practice.

Countersigning

While it is a minimum requirement for centres to have the appropriately qualified workforce in place, it is understood that centres may have new staff who are working towards those requirements. During this period, centres are required to have a robust countersigning strategy in place that supports and validates unqualified assessment and

quality assurance decisions until the point where they meet the requirements as detailed above.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Assessments must be carried out in accordance with the published assessment plan and all work submitted must be the apprentice's own. AI tools must not be used to generate evidence in its entirety or to replace the apprentice's own judgement, performance or competence. Any use of AI must be transparent, limited and properly referenced.

Where AI has been used by the apprentice as part of normal work activity (for example, drafting a document, worksheet or PowerPoint) this may form part of the portfolio provided that:

The apprentice has materially authored, verified and taken responsibility for the content:

- AI use is clearly declared and referenced within the work (include tool name, purpose and how outputs were verified)
- Source prompts, system settings and the portions influenced by AI are retained and available for review
- AI outputs must not substitute for authentic demonstration of competence against the standard

If an AI tool is used at any stage of an assessment method (for example, to prepare a presentation outline or to organise notes), its use must be fully referenced in the submission or assessor records, and must not compromise authenticity, validity or security. Assessors must be satisfied that decisions remain rooted in the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours, and in direct evidence gathered through observation, questioning and professional discussion.

AI tools must not be used to produce assessment evidence end-to-end, to fabricate logs/records or to simulate performance.

Click here to return to contents

Gateway to completion

Gateway to completion requirements

After apprentices have undertaken their assessment, employers and providers will need to complete the gateway to completion confirming the following:

- minimum duration has been met in line with the assessment plan.
- employability skills and behaviours have been suitably demonstrated.
  The employer is responsible for verifying that each employability skills and behaviour statement has been suitably demonstrated by the apprentice over the course of the programme. EB6 does not need to be confirmed by the employer but should form a key element of the apprentice's off-the-job training package.

The **gateway to completion** must be completed through the Highfield Assessment Hub.

If you require any support completing this section, please contact your customer engagement team at Highfield Assessment.

Click here to return to contents

The Health and Social Care foundation apprenticeship

Below are the assessment outcomes from the assessment plan. Learning and assessment will be based upon the knowledge and skills statements and the associated assessment outcomes are used to assess and grade the apprentice within each assessment method.

(*) Knowledge and skills statements which offer opportunities to develop functional skills English and maths are identified with an asterisk.

AO1- Legislation, policies and codes of conduct	
Knowledge Test, Question and Answer	
Assessment outcome **Demonstrates understanding of and compliance with legislation, policies, and codes of conduct necessary to protect individuals and meet health and social care standards.**	
Knowledge	**Amplification**
K4 Fundamental principles of a **duty of care**.	**Duty of care** • A legal and ethical obligation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of individuals under your care. It means acting in the best interests of individuals, avoiding acts or omissions that could cause harm.
K5 Fundamental principles of **adult safeguarding** and how to report a **safeguarding concern**.	**Adult safeguarding** • Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This includes identifying signs of abuse and following procedures to report concerns. **Safeguarding concern** • Any suspicion, allegation or indication that an individual may be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. • Staff should know how to recognise these concerns and follow correct procedures to report them promptly and appropriately to

	safeguarding leads or external authorities such as the local authority safeguarding team or police.

K8 Fundamental principles of **infection prevention and control**. *	**Infection prevention and control**
	• Measures and practices used to reduce the risk of spreading infections. Includes:
	  ○ hand hygiene
	  ○ use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
	  ○ cleaning protocols
	  ○ managing exposure risks, for example, covering wounds

K14 Principles of **safe moving and handling** of **equipment and other objects** and assistance of individuals.	**Safe moving and handling**
	• The safe use of techniques and equipment to move individuals or items, reducing the risk of injury to both the worker and the individual receiving care.
	Equipment and other objects
	• Items used to support care or daily tasks, such as:
	  ○ hoists
	  ○ wheelchairs
	  ○ medical devices, for example, monitoring equipment
	  ○ kitchen utensils
	• These must be:
	  ○ handled correctly
	  ○ stored correctly
	  ○ maintained correctly

Skills	**Amplification**
S3 Work in partnership with **others** to help to keep individuals safe.	**Others** • Colleagues

	• Families • Other health professionals
S6 Follow **infection prevention and control precautions** to protect yourself and others in the workplace. *	**Infection prevention and control precautions** • Hand hygiene • Personal protective equipment (PPE) • Safe use of equipment • Sharps safety

S11 Move and handle equipment or other items safely and assist individuals.	**Move and handle**
	• The safe use of techniques and equipment to move individuals or items, reducing the risk of injury to both the worker and the individual receiving care.
	Equipment and other items
	• Items used to support care or daily tasks, such as:
	  ○ hoists
	  ○ wheelchairs
	  ○ medical devices, for example, monitoring equipment
	  ○ kitchen utensils
	• These must be:
	  ○ handled correctly
	  ○ stored correctly
	  ○ maintained correctly

AO2- Delivering safe and high-quality care and support	
Practical Assessment - Portfolio of Evidence	
Assessment outcome **Demonstrates knowledge and skills essential to providing safe and high-quality care and support that meets diverse individual needs.**	
Knowledge	**Amplification**

K3 The importance of **equality, diversity and inclusion** and **human rights**.	**Equality, diversity and inclusion**
	• Ensuring fair treatment and opportunity for all, in line with the Equality Act, which protects people from discrimination based on:
	  ○ age
	  ○ disability
	  ○ gender reassignment
	  ○ marriage and civil partnership
	  ○ pregnancy and maternity
	  ○ race
	  ○ religion or belief
	  ○ sexual orientation
	  ○ sex (biologically male or female)
	• Embracing differences in culture and ethnicity
	• Ensuring no one is discriminated against
	Human rights
	• Human rights (Human Rights Act) are the basic freedoms and protections that every person is entitled to, simply by being human. Key rights relevant to health and social care include:
	  ○ the right to life - providing safe care, protecting from harm or neglect

	○ the right to be free from inhuman or degrading treatment - ensuring dignity, privacy and respectful care ○ the right to liberty - supporting freedom of choice and movement, with lawful procedures if restrictions are needed ○ the right to respect for private and family life - protecting confidentiality, personal information and autonomy ○ the right to non-discrimination - treating all individuals equally, regardless of age, sex (biologically male or female), disability, race, religion or other status
K6 Fundamental **person-centred values** to **maximise an individual's independence**. *	**Person-centred values** • An approach that places the individual at the centre of their care. Values include dignity, respect, independence, privacy and choice. **Maximise an individual's independence** • Supporting people to live their lives with as much control, choice and autonomy as possible, while ensuring their safety and wellbeing
K7 Fundamental **mental health, physical health and emotional wellbeing** needs that individuals may have.	**Mental, physical and emotional wellbeing needs** • These refer to the holistic aspects of health ○ Physical includes bodily health ▪ Mobility and exercise ○ Mental covers cognitive and psychological aspects ▪ Access to mental health services ○ Emotional relates to feelings, mood and social interactions ▪ Support groups

K10 Fundamental principles of **health promotion and illness prevention** to support **positive lifestyle choices**. *	**Health promotion and illness prevention**
	• Encouraging healthy behaviours such as exercise, balanced nutrition and smoking cessation. It also involves screening, education and support to reduce the risk of illness.
	Positive lifestyle choices
	• Everyday decisions and behaviours that help maintain or improve health and wellbeing, including:
	  ○ good nutrition
	  ○ sleep
	  ○ hydration
	  ○ limiting alcohol
	  ○ avoiding smoking or drugs
	  ○ staying active
	  ○ maintaining social relationship

K12 Common health conditions and **routine interventions** and knowing when and to whom to **escalate for action**.	**Common health conditions**
	• Conditions frequently encountered in care settings, such as diabetes, dementia, arthritis or respiratory illnesses.
	Routine interventions
	• Routine interventions may include:
	  ○ medication management
	  ○ checking blood pressure
	  ○ dressing wounds or supporting with mobility aids
	  ○ monitoring and promoting adherence to care plans.
	Escalate for action
	• The process of reporting concerns when a person's condition worsens or deviates from expected norms. This may involve

	alerting a nurse, supervisor, GP or emergency services depending on urgency.
K13 Techniques and sources of support to help develop **personal resilience** when working in a health or social care setting.	**Personal resilience** • The ability to recover from challenges and maintain emotional strength and wellbeing. Techniques may include stress management, reflection, peer support and maintaining work-life balance.
Skills	**Amplification**
S2 Act in the **best interest** of individuals to ensure they do not come to harm.	**Best interest** • Putting the individual first • Involving them in decision-making where possible • Balancing safety with rights
S4 Support individuals using **person centred values**. *	**Person-centred values** • An approach that places the individual at the centre of their care. Values include dignity, respect, independence, privacy and choice.

S5 Adapt your approach when providing care and support to meet the needs of the individual.	**Adapt your approach**
	• The ability to be flexible and change your approach based on:
	  ○ preferences and routines
	  ○ cultural and religious needs
	  ○ abilities
	  ○ health conditions
	  ○ communication styles
	  ○ emotional needs

S8: Support individuals with **positive lifestyle choices** to promote health and wellbeing. *	**Positive lifestyle choices** • Everyday decisions and behaviours that help maintain or improve health and wellbeing, including: ○ good nutrition ○ sleep ○ hydration ○ limiting alcohol ○ avoiding smoking or drugs ○ staying active ○ maintaining social relationship
S10 Develop **personal resilience** when working in a health or social care setting.	**Personal resilience** • The ability to recover from challenges and maintain emotional strength and wellbeing. Techniques may include: ○ stress management ○ reflection ○ peer support ○ maintaining work-life balance

AO3- The wider health and social care system	
Practical Assessment - Portfolio of Evidence	
Assessment outcome **Demonstrates knowledge and skills related to the wider health and social care system including basic food hygiene and preparation, using digital systems, how the sectors link together, and the career opportunities available.**	
Knowledge	**Amplification**
K1 Introduction to the **health and social care sectors**, and how the sectors link together.	**Health and social care sectors** • These include services that are linked through joint care plans, referrals and multi-disciplinary teams such as: o Hospitals o GP practices o Care homes o Community care o Domiciliary care
K2 Career progression opportunities. *	**Career progression opportunities** • Possible pathways such as: o support worker o senior carer o care coordinator o nurse o manager
K9 Developments in **digital working and professional boundaries** when using technology. *	**Digital working and professional boundaries** • Use of digital tools such as electronic records, remote monitoring, and communication platforms. Maintaining professional boundaries means ensuring confidentiality, appropriate use of technology and respectful communication.

K11 Basic **food hygiene and preparation** methods. *	**Food hygiene and preparation** • Practices such as proper storage, preparation, cooking and serving of food to prevent contamination and promote safety, including temperature control and cross-contamination prevention. • Core techniques such as washing hands and surfaces, separating raw and cooked foods, cooking to safe temperatures, proper storage, using clean utensils and checking use-by dates — all of which are vital to avoid foodborne illness and meet care standards.
Skills	**Amplification**

S1 Explore **career progression opportunities** within the health and social care sectors. *	**Career progression opportunities**
	• Possible pathways include:
	  ○ support worker
	  ○ senior carer
	  ○ care coordinator
	  ○ nurse
	  ○ manager

S7 Use **digital systems** and technology in the workplace. *	**Digital systems**
	• Software and platforms used in health and social care settings, such as:
	  ○ electronic care plans
	  ○ medication management systems
	  ○ incident reporting tools
	  ○ scheduling software
	  ○ communication platforms

S9 Apply basic **food hygiene and preparation** methods. *	**Food hygiene and preparation** • Practices such as proper storage, preparation, cooking and serving of food to prevent contamination and promote safety, including temperature control and cross-contamination prevention. • Core techniques such as washing hands and surfaces, separating raw and cooked foods, cooking to safe temperatures, proper storage, using clean utensils and checking use-by dates — all of which are vital to avoid foodborne illness and meet care standards.

Employability skills and behaviours
Behaviours
EB1: Communicate and share information using verbal, non-verbal, written and digital methods. **EB2:** Act in a professional manner including good time keeping and conduct. **EB3:** Apply new learning and feedback to everyday practice. **EB4:** Complete own work tasks and ask for help when needed. **EB5:** Work with colleagues to contribute to team outcomes. **EB6:** Seek ways to manage own financial, health and wellbeing needs using available resources. **EB7:** Overcome challenges and adapt to changes at work. **EB8:** Work in line with health, safety and environmental requirements.
Behaviours must be confirmed by the employer and confirmed on the gateway to completion section in the Highfield Assessment Hub. EB6 does not need to be confirmed by the employer but should form a key element of the apprentice's off-the-job training package.

Click here to return to contents

Assessing AO1 – knowledge test and question and answer

Knowledge test

The test consists of **20 questions** including multiple-choice questions and will last **60 minutes**. The **pass** mark is 12 out of 20.

The multiple-choice test may be delivered online or paper-based and should be taken in controlled conditions in line with Highfield's invigilation policy. The test is closed-book which means that the apprentice cannot refer to reference books or materials. The test must be marked by Highfield.

The knowledge test will cover knowledge statements within AO1 as stipulated in this specification.

In each paper, questions will cover each of the knowledge statements, however, not every aspect of every area will be covered in every test.

Question and answer

There will be a minimum of **3 questions** asked by an assessor in **30 minutes**.

The question and answer will assess the skill statements within AO1 as stipulated in this specification.

The question and answer may be delivered online or in person and should be taken in controlled conditions in line with Highfield's invigilation policy.

The questions can be asked by the provider and the answers recorded and submitted to Highfield. Alternatively, the questions can be asked by a Highfield Assessor. In both cases the responses will be marked by Highfield. Further guidance can be found in the Highfield Support Pack.

Before the assessment

Employers/providers should:

- brief the apprentice on the areas that will be assessed by the knowledge test and question and answer.
- in readiness for the assessment, set the apprentice a mock knowledge test and question and answer. A mock knowledge test and questions are available to download from the Highfield Assessment website. The mock tests are available as paper-based tests and also on the mock e-assessment system.

Grading the knowledge test and question and answer assessment

Apprentices will be marked against statements included in the tables below.

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices must score at least 12 out of 20 on the knowledge test **and** achieve all of the skills statements in the question and answer
- **Unsuccessful** apprentices will have scored 11 or below on the knowledge test **and/or** not achieved all of the skills statements in the question and answer

Knowledge test criteria
K4: Fundamental principles of a duty of care.
K5: Fundamental principles of adult safeguarding and how to report a safeguarding concern.
K8: Fundamental principles of infection prevention and control. *
K14: Principles of safe moving and handling of equipment and other objects and assistance of individuals.

Question and answer criteria
S3: Work in partnership with others to help to keep individuals safe.
S6: Follow infection prevention and control precautions to protect yourself and others in the workplace. *
S11: Move and handle equipment or other items safely and assist individuals.

Click here to return to contents

Assessing AO2 and AO3 – portfolio of evidence

Portfolio of evidence

The apprentice must compile a portfolio of evidence that is mapped against the knowledge and skills (KSs) assessed by a portfolio of evidence.

Evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one knowledge and skill as a qualitative approach is suggested as opposed to a quantitative approach.

Evidence sources for the portfolio may include:

- work-based observation
- expert witness testimonies
- written report of a case-based discussion
- written report of supporting an intervention
- clinical supervision reflection
- evidence of ongoing professional development
- reflective accounts, countersigned by a manager

This is not a definitive list and other evidence sources are possible.

The portfolio can include reflective accounts and employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example, witness statements) rather than opinions.

Expert witness testimonies can be completed where observations cannot be conducted due to:

- logistical and operational barriers
- confidentiality and privacy restrictions
- health and safety concerns

Expert witness testimonies must be completed by an individual with:

- direct knowledge of the subject area
- clear understanding of the assessment criteria

The portfolio must be compiled alongside a portfolio matrix. This can be downloaded from our website. The portfolio matrix must be fully completed including a declaration by the apprentice to confirm that the portfolio is valid and attributable to the apprentice.

Before the assessment

Employers/providers should:

- ensure the apprentice knows which areas will be assessed (outlined on the following pages)
- ensure the apprentice is aware of evidence permitted to form part of the portfolio of evidence

Grading the practical assessment

Apprentices will be marked against the statements included in the tables on the following pages. The portfolio of evidence can be marked by Highfield or the provider.

- To achieve a **pass**, apprentices must achieve all of the knowledge and skills statements
- **Unsuccessful** apprentices will not have achieved all of the knowledge and skills statements

Portfolio of evidence
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
K1: Introduction to the health and social care sectors, and how the sectors link together.
K2: Career progression opportunities. *
K3: The importance of equality, diversity and inclusion and human rights.
K6: Fundamental person-centred values to maximise an individual's independence. *
K7: Fundamental mental health, physical health and emotional wellbeing needs that individuals may have.
K9: Developments in digital working and professional boundaries when using technology. *
K10: Fundamental principles of health promotion and illness prevention to support positive lifestyle choices. *
K11: Basic food hygiene and preparation methods. *
K12: Common health conditions and routine interventions and knowing when and to whom to escalate for action.
K13: Techniques and sources of support to help develop personal resilience when working in a health or social care setting.
S1: Explore career progression opportunities within the health and social care sectors. *
S2: Act in the best interest of individuals to ensure they do not come to harm.
S4: Support individuals using person centred values. *

Portfolio of evidence
To pass, the following must be evidenced.
S5: Adapt your approach when providing care and support to meet the needs of the individual. **S7:** Use digital systems and technology in the workplace. * **S8:** Support individuals with positive lifestyle choices to promote health and wellbeing. * **S9:** Apply basic food hygiene and preparation methods **S10:** Develop personal resilience when working in a health or social care setting.

Click here to return to contents

Grading

The apprenticeship is graded pass or fail.

To achieve a pass, the apprentice is required to pass each of the assessment methods.

The overall grade for the apprentice is determined using the matrix below.

Knowledge test	Question and answer	Portfolio of evidence	Overall grade awarded
Fail any of the assessment methods			**Fail**
Pass	Pass	Pass	**Pass**

Reattempts

Reattempts are permitted for this standard to ensure apprentices are provided with a fair opportunity to demonstrate competence. Apprentices may undertake a reattempt following an unsuccessful outcome.

If a reattempt is required for Highfield-marked methods, please call the Highfield scheduling team to arrange the reattempt.

Click here to return to contents