



National Occupational Standards (NOS) for the role of learning support practitioner in the lifelong learning sector






© Crown Copyright 2007

Published by Lifelong Learning UK

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial research, education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged.

DECEMBER 2007

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
 STANDARD A: LEARNING SUPPORT	4
 STANDARD B: PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING SUPPORT	10
 STANDARD C: SPECIALIST LEARNING SUPPORT	13

Please note the word teacher has been used as a generic term for teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the learning and skills sector.

Introducing the standards

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) for learning support practitioners in the lifelong learning sector describe the skills, knowledge and understanding required of all those who perform a learning support role. The standards will contribute to the professionalisation of the learning support workforce and support a wider recognition of the valuable role it plays in teaching and learning. The standards provide a benchmark for performance and will underpin professional development opportunities that recognise the developing skills of practitioners.

These standards do not apply to teachers undertaking what is may be termed learning support. Their practice should rightly be considered in relation to standards for teachers. In addition, these standards do not relate to the wider support workforce, for example, those providing information, advice and guidance. The role of the wider support workforce is primarily concerned with supporting learners rather than learning. As such, their practice should be considered in relation to the appropriate standards for the area they support.

The role of learning support practitioner

Provision of quality learning support takes place in the broad context of teaching and learning. Learning support practitioners work under the direction of a person leading the learning. They contribute to the provision of learning opportunities that promote the achievement and progression of the learners they support. The learner is at the heart of this process.

Not all the standards detailed here apply to all learning support practitioners. For any individual the relevant standards are determined by the role and responsibilities undertaken. The learning support practitioner role has been detailed in *The learning support practitioner role description LLUK 2007*. This will provide a basis on which to define any particular role together with its responsibilities and demands in terms of knowledge, understanding and practice.

Individuals may carry out a broad range of support roles which relate to other areas of specialism. Where a combination of support roles is undertaken these should be underpinned by standards taken from the appropriate specialisms. For example, those providing learning support for disabled learners may also have care responsibilities; these roles should be underpinned by a combination of the appropriate standards from the learning support practitioner standards and those for Care.

Similarly, if a learning support practitioner is responsible for the co-ordination of others' work, this aspect of the role should be underpinned by the appropriate leadership and management standards and qualifications.

Some learning support practitioners have more responsibility than others. Such practitioners have a high level of knowledge, understanding and practice related to a particular specialism. They include, for example, those who are experienced in work with disabled learners.

The development of a qualification framework will support career development and progression opportunities for learning support practitioners. Learning support practitioners need opportunities to progress within learning support and also into other related fields. Their career path is not necessarily into teaching, but can be into community learning and development, youth work, social work and others. They can have different but equally important knowledge, understanding and practice to those leading the learning. Learning support practitioners need standards which can be combined with standards from other specialisms to underpin professional development activities. These will provide for progression within the learning support role and/or into other related fields.

Developing the standards

In 2004 the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) produced a draft of the NOS for learning support. These have been reviewed and revised with reference to current and emerging contexts. Practitioners, employers and stakeholders throughout the sector and across the four nations of the UK were consulted on the first draft of the standards and confirmed the need to recognise this valuable role more widely. Respondents were clear that the provision of learning support is significant in supporting effective learning.

LLUK has now developed standards which are overarching and appropriate for all learning support practitioners, whether new or experienced, and in any context. The standards apply to any stage of a practitioner's career. They will be used to underpin professional development for all practitioners.

STANDARD A: PROVIDING LEARNING SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS OF LEARNERS

For those learning support practitioners working under the direction of the person leading the learning who:

- provide learning support for individuals and/or groups
- work with others to provide learning support
- promote learner independence and self-determination
- promote inclusion and participation
- improve own practice and that of the organisation.

Professional Attributes

Learning support practitioners in the lifelong learning sector value:

- all learners, their progress and development, their potential, their learning goals and aspirations, and the experience they bring to learning
- learning, its potential to benefit individuals (emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically) and its contribution to the wider community and the economy
- learners' independence and self-determination
- equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce, and the community
- constructive working relationships with colleagues, groups and/or organisations to promote the progress and development of learners
- improving the quality of their practice through reflection, evaluation of their own practice and continuing professional development.



Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

AP 1

Provide high quality learning support that enables learners to achieve identified goals

AP 2

Engage learners in activities that advance learning for individuals and groups

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

AK 1.1

The importance of having high expectations of learners

AK 1.2

The contribution learning support can make to learners' achievement

AK 1.3

The nature, extent and boundaries of learning support roles

AK 1.4

The aims, objectives, content and approaches of the learning programme

AK 1.5

How individual learning objectives are agreed with the learner

AK 2.1

Ways in which learning activities can meet learner needs

AK 2.2

Ways of motivating and engaging learners that promote learner confidence

AK 2.3

Flexible and varied approaches to learning

AK 2.4

Ways of working with individuals

AK 2.5

Ways of working with groups

Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

AP 3

Develop and maintain effective relationships with learners that promote learning

AP 4

Communicate effectively with learners

AP 5

Use, adapt and/or develop resources that support learners' needs

AP 6

Provide support that builds on learners' experience, learning preferences and levels of independence and encourages learners to work independently

AP 7

Work with colleagues with appropriate expertise to identify and address the language, literacy, numeracy and ICT needs of learners

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

AK 3.1

The importance of mutual respect

AK 3.2

The role of advocacy and self-advocacy in the achievement of learner goals

AK 3.3

The boundaries of the teacher/learner relationship, including ethical and professional considerations

AK 4.1

Ways to structure and present information and ideas clearly and effectively to support learning

AK 5.1

The contribution that resources can make to the learners' achievement

AK 5.2

Ways to encourage learners to manage and use resources independently

AK 5.3

How to use new and emergent technologies to meet the needs of individual learners

AK 6.1

Individual learners' learning and support needs

AK 6.2

Ways in which learning activities can promote learner independence

AK 7.1

The different ways in which language, literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are integral to learners' achievement



Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

AP 8

Support learner progression

AP 9

Provide learning support in a purposeful learning environment where learners feel safe, secure, confident and valued

AP 10

Promote, maintain and model behaviour that demonstrates respect for others

AP 11

Enable learners to manage, reflect on and make decisions about their learning

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

AK 8.1

Ways in which learning promotes the wellbeing of individuals and communities

AK 8.2

Progression opportunities and routes for learners

AK 8.3

The routes available to the learner to access guidance and support for progression

AK 9.1

The contribution a learning environment can make to learners' success and achievement

AK 9.2

Ways of promoting a learning environment that is inclusive and that complies with safe practice

AK 10.1

Ways to support learners consistently and as individuals

AK 10.2

Ways to encourage behaviour that promotes respect for and between others

AK 10.3

Ways to identify and respond to discriminatory behaviour in order to promote and maintain an inclusive environment for learning

AK 11.1

Ways to help the learner to understand and take responsibility for their own learning



Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

AP 12

Collaborate with and respect the contribution of colleagues and others

AP 13

Communicate relevant information about learners to others with a legitimate interest

AP 14

Maintain accurate records relating to learning support

AP 15

Provide learning support that conforms to organisational and legal requirements

AP 16

Contribute, and encourage learners to contribute, to review of learning programme and of organisation

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

AK 12.1

Roles and responsibilities of colleagues and others

AK 12.2

The importance of effective team working

AK 12.3

When to seek advice from colleagues and others

AK 13.1

The need for confidentiality, respect and trust in communicating with others about learners

AK 13.2

Legal requirements relating to confidentiality and disclosure

AK 14.1

Organisational systems and processes for record-keeping

AK 15.1

Relevant legal requirements and codes of practice

AK 15.2

The needs and rights of young people and vulnerable adults

AK 16.1

Own role in the organisation's planning and review processes

AK 16.2

Ways in which learners can contribute to planning and review



Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

AP 17

Evaluate and improve the effectiveness of own practice, identify own professional development and training needs, and take steps to address these

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

AK 17.1

Ways to identify, reflect on and evaluate the impact of own practice on the learning of individuals

AK 17.2

Ways to develop and improve own practice

AK 17.3

Ensure own personal skills in English and/or Welsh, mathematics and ICT are appropriate for the effective support of learners

STANDARD B: PLANNING AND ASSESSING FOR LEARNING SUPPORT

For those learning support practitioners working under the direction of the person leading the learning who:

- provide learning support for individuals and/or groups
- work with others to provide learning support
- promote learner independence and self-determination
- promote inclusion and participation
- improve own practice and that of the organisation.

Professional Attributes

Learning support practitioners in the lifelong learning sector value:

- all learners, their progress and development, their potential, their learning goals and aspirations, and the experience they bring to learning
- learning, its potential to benefit individuals (emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically) and its contribution to the wider community and the economy
- learners' independence and self-determination
- equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce, and the community
- constructive working relationships with colleagues, groups and/or organisations to promote the progress and development of learners
- improving the quality of their practice through reflection, evaluation of their own practice and continuing professional development.

Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

BP 1

Contribute to the planning of learning support that is inclusive and meets curriculum requirements

BP 2

Contribute to the planning of learning support that meets the needs of individual learners and groups and enables them to progress towards their identified learning objectives

BP 3

Contribute to the negotiation and monitoring of individual learning objectives

BP 4

Evaluate learner response to specialist learning support and use this information with colleagues in the planning of further support

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

BK 1.1

Ways to contribute effectively to the planning and preparation of learning support

BK 1.2

How to plan for learning support that is equitable, inclusive and engages with diversity

BK 1.3

Requirements of learner's programme(s)

BK 2.1

Ways to respond to and meet individual learning goals through a variety of approaches

BK 2.2

Principles and practice of personalised approaches to learning support

BK 3.1

Ways to work with learners and with colleagues to establish and monitor individual learning objectives

BK 3.2

Ways to support learners in communicating their learning preferences and needs to inform the planning of provision

BK 3.3

The role that advocacy and self-advocacy play in ensuring that learners' experience, aspirations and objectives are central to the planning process

BK 4.1

Ways to evaluate own specialist role and performance in planning and contributing to future learning support



Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

BP 5

Support colleagues in the development and application of assessment methods

BP 6

Promote learning through questioning and constructive feedback and involve learners in feedback activities

BP 7

Encourage learners to share responsibility for assessment of their own learning

BP 8

Work in accordance with the quality requirements of the organisation in relation to assessment and monitoring of learner progress

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

BK 5.1

Approaches to formative and summative assessment that support accessibility, fairness, and consistency

BK 5.2

The practical application of different forms of formative and summative assessment

BK 5.3

Theories and principles of assessment and methods that promote learning and progression

BK 6.1

Methods of assessment for learning (formative assessment) that promote learning and progression

BK 6.2

The role of feedback and questioning in assessment for learning

BK 7.1

Ways to involve learners in assessment of their own learning

BK 7.2

How to support learners in their understanding of assessment requirements and their provision of appropriate assessment evidence

BK 8.1

Methods of recording assessment information

BK 8.2

How assessment and review contribute to the monitoring, review and improvement of the quality of provision

STANDARD C : PROVIDING SPECIALIST LEARNING SUPPORT

For specialist learning support practitioners working under the direction of the person leading the learning who:

- use specialist knowledge to contribute to identifying learner needs
- use specialist knowledge and skills to support learners
- communicate information about learners in relation to specialist area of expertise
- use specialist knowledge and skills to contribute to curriculum development
- use specialist knowledge and skills to contribute to design and implementation of learning activities, resources and assessment methods
- undertake professional development to develop and maintain specialist knowledge and skills
- support the professional development of others in relation to specialist support area.

Professional Attributes

Learning support practitioners in the lifelong learning sector value:

- all learners, their progress and development, their potential, their learning goals and aspirations, and the experience they bring to learning
- learning, its potential to benefit individuals (emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically) and its contribution to the wider community and the economy
- learners' independence and self-determination
- equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce, and the community
- constructive working relationships with colleagues, groups and/or organisations to promote the progress and development of learners
- improving the quality of their practice through reflection, evaluation of their own practice and continuing professional development.



Performance Criteria

Learning support practitioners:

CP 1

Use knowledge of learning support in their specialist area(s) to provide high quality learning support

CP 2

Use their specialist knowledge to identify and address individual learners' learning support needs

CP 3

Use learning support activities relevant to their specialist area(s)

CP 4

Support learners, colleagues and others in the selection, development, use and evaluation of resources in providing specialist support

CP 5

Engage in professional development in specialist area(s) and in relevant learning support

CP 6

Support progression and the transition of the learner in the context of the specialist area(s)

Knowledge and understanding

Learning support practitioners know and understand:

CK 1.1

Their specialist area(s) including current developments and initiatives, relevant internal and external agencies, and networks

CK 2.1

Theories and principles of learning relating to their specialist area(s)

CK 2.2

Ways to identify individual learners' support needs in their specialist area(s)

CK 2.3

Ways that specialist learning support can effectively address individual learning needs and promote inclusion

CK 3.1

Use of learning support strategies in their specialist area(s)

CK 4.1

Use of resources in the context of specialist support, including the use of new and emerging technologies

CK 5.1

How to access and engage in professional development in specialist area(s) and relevant learning support

CK 6.1

Progression opportunities and routes for learners in specialist area(s)

CK 6.2

Ways to assist learners to manage transitions in the context of the specialist area(s)



Published by

Lifelong Learning UK

5th Floor

St Andrew's House

18-20 St Andrew Street

London EC4A 3AY

Telephone: 0870 757 7890

Information and Advice Service: 020 7936 5798

www.lluk.org

Skills for Business is an employer-led network consisting of 25 Sector Skills Councils and the Sector Skills Development Agency. Through its unrivalled labour market intelligence and insights from employers in all sectors of the UK economy, the network identifies change needed in policy and practice relating to education and skills development. With the influence granted by licences from the governments of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and with private and public funding, this independent network engages with the education and training supply side, such as universities, colleges, funders and qualifications bodies, to increase productivity at all levels in the workforce.