

The Standard for Residential Child Care 2015



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Ministerial foreword



Improving qualification requirements for workers in residential child care

I want Scotland to be the best place for all of our children and young people to grow up. If children need to be looked after away from home I want residential care to be a positive choice, not a place of last resort. Residential child care is an important part of a continuum of care, vital in the upbringing of the children and young people who are looked after away from home.

The National Residential Child Care Initiative (NRCCI) reported that, in order to best meet the increasingly complex needs of children in their care, all residential child care staff should be better qualified. I am pleased that the Standard for Residential Child Care, a significant part of achieving this aspiration, has now been published. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has led on the development of this Standard taking into account the views of stakeholders and young people, making sure that qualifications will properly reflect the requirements of workers.

I am sure that the new qualifications will help to strengthen practice across the sector. It also needs to reach people in every geographical location around Scotland through flexible delivery routes and 'taking the learning to the learner'. The task is challenging and for that reason Scotland's universities and colleges will be key to ensuring the right courses are both developed and delivered, using their expertise and established networks.

The challenges set for the residential child care workforce in the last decade around qualifications and registration with the SSSC have been considerable and I am impressed by the commitment and ability shown by those providing and working in residential child care to rise to these challenges.

The people who work in residential care, the staff, are consistently seen by young people as key to their happiness and wellbeing. The positive relationships they build with young people are central to enabling growth and promoting wellbeing. We must continue to invest in frontline workers to give them what they need to do in what is an important task.

I want to make sure we have confident, competent and dedicated workers contributing towards positive outcomes for children and families and providing the types of high quality services they need. That is why I am committed to a programme to improve their status and professionalism which is advanced by the publication of this Standard.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark McDonald'.

Mark McDonald MSP
Minister for Childcare and Early Years

Statement from QAA Scotland

This professional Standard relates to undergraduate programmes in residential child care in Scotland and is set at level 9 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

Professional standards are developed for higher education in Scotland for some disciplines in policy areas that are devolved to the Scottish Government, such as health, education and social care. They are developed by the relevant professional or national body with the support of QAA Scotland. As such they are not a formal part of the QAA Quality Code but their purpose and function are very similar to QAA's suite of subject benchmark statements. The SSSC developed this Standard with the support of QAA Scotland.

Like subject benchmark statements, professional standards are used for a variety of purposes. They are an important external source of reference for higher education providers who are designing and developing new programmes in a subject area with substantial links to professions in devolved policy areas. They provide general guidance of the learning outcomes associated with these programmes but are not a description of a detailed curriculum in the subject.

Professional standards also provide support to higher education providers looking for internal quality assurance. They allow the learning outcomes specified for a particular programme to be reviewed and evaluated against agreed general expectations about standards as part of institution led quality review. Professional standards allow for flexibility and innovation in programme design and can stimulate academic discussion and debate on the content of new and existing programmes within an agreed overall conceptual framework.

Professional standards also provide support to higher education providers engaged in the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) process as they can be used to review learning outcomes specified for a particular programme against agreed expectations about standards.

This professional Standard may also be of interest to students working towards a qualification in residential child care, residential child care workers themselves who may be reflecting on their own professional development, managers and mentors in employing organisations and those who supervise placements and provide opportunities for practice-based learning.

Part one:

The Standard for Residential Child Care

1 Introduction

1.1 The Standard for Residential Child Care programmes in Scotland will inform all awards and qualifications in the integrated qualifications and professional framework.

1.2 The Standard for Residential Child Care contains benchmarks and expected features.

1.2.1 The **benchmarks** specify what is expected of a learner who has completed a degree level programme in residential child care and so meets the qualification requirement for registration as a practitioner (this includes workers, supervisors and managers) by the SSSC. The benchmarks specify the design requirements for programmes.

1.2.2 The **expected features** are intended to clarify and illustrate aspects of learner performance that the programme is designed to achieve. These features will be used by programme providers in designing assessment strategies to make sure the requirements for learner performance are met. Expected features are in numbered points following each benchmark.

2 Professional values and personal commitment

2.1 Practitioners share an ethical framework of values and principles.

They:

2.1.1 recognise that building relationships and promoting children's rights are corner stones of ethical practice in caring for children and young people

2.1.2 understand that acting ethically means using the values, knowledge and skills of your profession to inform your professional practice

2.1.3 work through processes of tolerance, equality, democracy and justice rather than through the use of power

2.1.4 acknowledge that professional values and beliefs are not automatically the same as personal values and beliefs and that part of being a professional involves a recognition and resolution of this tension in professional situations

2.1.5 understand the complex relationships between needs, rights and responsibilities and can take account of this in practice

2.1.6 understand that ethical awareness is an ongoing process requiring reference to accepted ethical frameworks and active deliberation.

2.2 Practitioners value and demonstrate a commitment to the rights of the children and young people for whom they are responsible.

They:

- 2.2.1 respect and value the individuality and uniqueness of each child and young person
- 2.2.2 have high expectations for all children and a commitment to ensuring that they can achieve their full potential
- 2.2.3 respect the rights of all children without discrimination as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (online) and in current Scottish legislation
- 2.2.4 respect the views of children and young people and promote their right to participate and be active agents in their own lives
- 2.2.5 recognise that children and young people have strengths and needs and have a right to be supported and cared for in a way that recognises their strengths, meets their needs, takes account of their choices and protects them
- 2.2.6 act as advocates for children and young people and provide opportunities for independent representation and advocacy
- 2.2.7 seek to ensure that children and young people understand their rights and respect the rights of others
- 2.2.8 respect children and young people's rights to communicate using their preferred methods of communication and language and to access information about themselves
- 2.2.9 value and promote fairness and justice and adopt anti-discriminatory practices
- 2.2.10 nurture and safeguard the children and young people for whom they are responsible and encourage them to be healthy, active and achieving.

2.3 Practitioners value themselves and others by taking responsibility for their own professional development and wellbeing and by contributing to the development and wellbeing of others with whom they work.

They:

- 2.3.1 demonstrate the standards of conduct and practice set out in the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers (2016)
- 2.3.2 value and develop an environment for learning that enables and supports learning for themselves and for others and where roles and practices are valued and developed
- 2.3.3 show a commitment to the learning and wellbeing of workers for whom they are responsible, including volunteers and students on work placements
- 2.3.4 show a commitment to critical reflection, self-evaluation and continuing professional development as means of improving practice and broadening expertise

- 2.3.5 collaborate on continuing professional development with others in the service and in other allied services
- 2.3.6 contribute to, influence and respond to changes in the service and in other allied services.

2.4 Practitioners value and respect the parents and carers, families, communities and other agencies and partnerships with whom they work.

They:

- 2.4.1 provide a service that reflects clear and shared values and respect for individuals
- 2.4.2 establish a culture that values and respects the roles that parents and carers, family, friends and other key people have in children and young people's lives
- 2.4.3 promote and advocate high quality services for each child and family and work in partnership to provide them
- 2.4.4 develop an understanding of and respect for the professional values of others within multi-agency collaborative practice
- 2.4.5 provide opportunities to foster children and young people's understanding of different beliefs and cultures
- 2.4.6 promote opportunities for children and young people to participate in communities and to take responsibility as citizens in their own right.

3 Professional knowledge and understanding Children and young people and their childhoods

3.1 Practitioners have a critical understanding of childhood which underpins their practice and contributes to their joint working with others.

They:

- 3.1.1 demonstrate a critical understanding of how childhood, including a looked after childhood, is conceptualised and experienced in today's society by drawing on a range of theoretical disciplines such as sociology, social policy, psychology and ethics
- 3.1.2 are able to analyse and critically evaluate the contribution of parents and carers, families, friends and communities to children and young people's childhoods and the contribution of children and young people themselves

- 3.1.3 can draw on different disciplines and different theoretical perspectives to inform and challenge their understanding of concepts such as care, upbringing, and corporate parenting
- 3.1.4 demonstrate an understanding of the role and function of services for health, social welfare and education in relation to children and young people and their childhoods.

3.2 Practitioners have knowledge and a critical understanding of children and young people's development and learning and the factors that affect it.

They:

- 3.2.1 can draw on different theoretical models and perspectives to develop a critical understanding of how language develops in children and young people and the factors that affect that development
- 3.2.2 can identify methods that promote effective engagement with children and young people and enable them to communicate their feelings, views and preferences
- 3.2.3 develop a critical understanding of children and young people's personal, social and emotional development using relevant theories, including contrasting theories of attachment and adolescent development and can use that understanding to support wellbeing and development
- 3.2.4 demonstrate a critical understanding of adversity and trauma, their effects on children and young people and children's responses to them
- 3.2.5 understand the impact of social factors such as poverty and inequality on the life chances of children
- 3.2.6 know about and demonstrate an understanding of counselling and therapeutic roles in child care settings
- 3.2.7 have a critical understanding of, and aspirations for, children and young people as thinkers and active learners and can link this to decisions about provision
- 3.2.8 demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and models of health and wellbeing relevant for their own work with children and families and of the impact the service can have on the health and wellbeing of children and young people
- 3.2.9 have a developed knowledge and a critical understanding of the range of developmental impairments and disabilities that children and young people may have and can link these to decisions about practice.

3.3 Practitioners demonstrate a critical understanding of children and young people's rights and the legal, policy and practice requirements that arise from them.

They:

- 3.3.1 can identify and understand service requirements on equality, diversity, discrimination and rights and the understandings and principles that underpin them
- 3.3.2 demonstrate knowledge and a critical understanding of the practitioner's role in promoting children and young people's rights, choices, wellbeing and active participation
- 3.3.3 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of dealing with and challenging discrimination
- 3.3.4 understand the rights that key people, such as family, friends, carers, or others with whom a child or young person has a relationship, have when decisions are being made on the best interests of the child or young person
- 3.3.5 have a critical understanding of the nature of conflicts and dilemmas that may arise in relation to needs, rights and responsibilities and how these might be addressed.

Frameworks for practice

3.4 Practitioners have a critical understanding of the content of relevant organisational frameworks and working practices used by the service to enable and support play, recreation and learning opportunities for children and young people.

They:

- 3.4.1 demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the range of frameworks, statements of principles and guidance currently used by the service to support play, recreation, education, creativity, cultural and leisure activities and other learning opportunities
- 3.4.2 demonstrate a critical understanding of the use of everyday events, activities and relationships to promote the growth, development and learning of children and young people
- 3.4.3 know how to plan and provide safe and appropriate child and young person directed and adult initiated play and learning experiences and other activities in indoor, outdoor and out of setting spaces
- 3.4.4 have detailed knowledge of how to assess, plan and make effective personalised provision with children and young people taking account of their ages, interests, abilities and views
- 3.4.5 know about and have a critical understanding of the range of skills, styles and methods that promote good practice in engagement, communication and building relationships

- 3.4.6 demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of group dynamics and the contribution of group processes to individual and group development and learning
- 3.4.7 demonstrate a critical understanding of peer conflict and other specific behavioural challenges of children and young people and can link these to appropriate strategies to underpin policy and practice in managing behaviour
- 3.4.8 are aware of the nature and range of social media technologies and have a critical understanding of the strengths and challenges they present for children and young people.

3.5 Practitioners have a critical understanding of the theories and principles required to analyse and evaluate frameworks and working practices used by the service.

They:

- 3.5.1 can draw on a range of sources, including evidence from children and young people, to analyse and critically evaluate the content of current practices in relation to their relevance for children and young people's wellbeing, development and learning
- 3.5.2 know how to further develop frameworks and practices in order to maximise opportunities for effective engagement with children and young people
- 3.5.3 demonstrate knowledge and a critical understanding of current innovations in framework and programme development and how these may be integrated into practice
- 3.5.4 can make links and connections to framework development in related sectors such as health and education and to service developments both in other parts of the United Kingdom and internationally.

Systems and professional responsibilities

3.6 Practitioners have a critical understanding of the principle features of local, national and international systems and of policies, practices and legal requirements relevant to the service.

They:

- 3.6.1 demonstrate a sound knowledge and critical understanding of the implications for the service of current legal requirements, national strategies and policies and guidance on, for example, children's hearings, health and safety, risk assessment and management, handling information, child protection and safeguarding
- 3.6.2 are able to use their understanding of relevant legislation and policies to establish a culture that promotes children's rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of practice

- 3.6.3 demonstrate a critical understanding of strength/resilience based approaches, non-prejudicial/judgemental assessment, participatory tools, community based solutions and other developments that put the child at the centre in the cultures, systems and practices of this service and other allied services
- 3.6.4 can critically consider links between theory, policy and practice through analysing and critically evaluating the relationship of their service to relevant quality standards and policy initiatives
- 3.6.5 demonstrate a critical understanding of how family, school and local community resources, including inter-professional involvement, can build the capacity of the service and contribute to wider strategic developments within children's services.

3.7 Practitioners have a working knowledge of the breadth of the service and the professional roles and responsibilities of residential child care workers within it.

They:

- 3.7.1 have a critical understanding of the range of socio-historical influences and theoretical orientations that have contributed to the development of residential child care services and the constructions of children and childhood they reflect
- 3.7.2 demonstrate an understanding of the breadth of the current residential child care service and the range of systems which underpin provision within it and can locate these within the wider context of provision for all Looked After Children
- 3.7.3 demonstrate an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of residential child care practitioners
- 3.7.4 know about and understand the social context, including the economic and political climate, within which the service is provided and can analyse and evaluate its impact on provision and professional roles
- 3.7.5 demonstrate a critical understanding of the evolving nature of the service and its workforce and the likely implications of this for systems and for professional responsibilities
- 3.7.6 demonstrate an understanding of the range of professional development opportunities available to practitioners.

3.8 Practitioners have a critical understanding of the contribution of other professionals to the service and to other relevant statutory and voluntary services.

They:

- 3.8.1 demonstrate an understanding of the professional attributes, roles and responsibilities of the range of other professionals who work in the service and in other relevant statutory and voluntary services, including those working in health, social welfare, education, housing and the police
- 3.8.2 demonstrate a capacity to work in partnership with specialist practitioners from relevant statutory and voluntary services who support the wellbeing and development of the children and young people when they are in the care of the service
- 3.8.3 know about a range of concepts and models of collaborative practice and inter-professional learning, including multidisciplinary and interagency approaches, and have a critical understanding of how these may contribute to service developments.

Leadership and management

3.9 Practitioners have a critical understanding of the principles, theories and concepts of leadership and management practice relevant for their role.

They:

- 3.9.1 demonstrate a critical understanding of models of leadership and leadership styles and can reflect on the implications of these for their current and future roles and practice
- 3.9.2 are able to analyse a variety of approaches for developing the vision and culture of an organisation and for developing and implementing policy and practice to suit strategic objectives
- 3.9.3 demonstrate an understanding of a variety of strategies for communicating, building and managing teams and supporting individual worker development
- 3.9.4 can analyse the complexity of the management role in relation to managing self and others, as well as physical and financial resources and can identify the management skills required
- 3.9.5 can analyse priorities and risks in developing and implementing business and operational plans and can identify approaches for managing these in practice.

Evidence based practice

3.10 Practitioners have the knowledge and understanding needed to support evidence based practice.

They:

- 3.10.1 know how to access and apply relevant research and enquiry based findings
- 3.10.2 know how to critically reflect on and engage in the systematic investigation of practice
- 3.10.3 can make informed choices among particular research methods and methods of evaluation
- 3.10.4 draw on a range of sources of evidence to analyse and evaluate practice
- 3.10.5 draw on relevant principles, theories and approaches to inform their practice
- 3.10.6 understand contrasting perspectives on evidence based working
- 3.10.7 demonstrate the ability to share and discuss with others the principles and perspectives that underpin their own professional practice.

4 Professional skills and abilities

Provide and support everyday experiences, play, recreation, and learning opportunities

4.1 Practitioners provide positive and caring relationships with each child and young person and with key people with whom the child or young person has a supportive relationship, including parents, carers, family and friends.

They:

- 4.1.1 build the ethos of the service around respect for and commitment to each child or young person and their family and to workers, other colleagues and visitors
- 4.1.2 have a clear focus on the wishes, feelings, safety and wellbeing of each child and young person
- 4.1.3 engage with and build trusting, caring and supportive relationships with each child and young person
- 4.1.4 listen to and pay attention to what children and young people communicate, value and respect, take account of their views and promote their involvement through democratic dialogue in decisions which affect them
- 4.1.5 support sensitive and effective communication with and between children and young people and their families

- 4.1.6 create environments where relationships with each child or young person are caring, positive and affirming and where each child or young person's confidence, resilience and self-esteem is encouraged and supported
- 4.1.7 provide opportunities for children and young people to develop positive and supportive relationships and to sustain existing networks of relationships.

4.2 Practitioners lead and contribute to the development of an environment which is caring and nurturing, safe, and inclusive.

They:

- 4.2.1 lead the experience of an environment and life space that is caring, comfortable, welcoming and accessible to each child and young person and one that promotes stability, continuity, wellbeing and personal development
- 4.2.2 develop policies and practices that provide a child-centred responsive environment which is safe and secure and meets all regulatory requirements and where children and young people can develop skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe
- 4.2.3 understand and carry out responsibilities in relation to child protection by having procedures for child protection in place that are understood and implemented by all staff and by having an ethos of trust where staff and children feel confident and supported in raising concerns about child protection issues
- 4.2.4 maintain their own and others' understanding of harm, abuse, safeguarding, protection and confidentiality
- 4.2.5 establish and maintain relationships with other agencies that promote safeguarding and protection and ensure that all workers understand their responsibilities and arrangements for liaising with other agencies when appropriate
- 4.2.6 assess, monitor and manage risk according to risk management policies, systems, procedures and practices and are able to respond appropriately to incidents
- 4.2.7 manage the complexity of caring, nurturing and keeping children and young people safe while providing challenge and choice in play, recreation and learning opportunities.

4.3 Practitioners coordinate and lead the provision of a balanced and flexible programme of activities that supports development and learning and encourages children and young people to be healthy, active, achieving, respected and responsible.

They:

- 4.3.1 assess, plan, implement and justify balanced and flexible programmes of activities that provide enriching and creative learning experiences and promote play, recreation, learning and development using national and local guidelines
- 4.3.2 build from and use everyday events as key opportunities to promote the growth, development and learning of children and young people, informed by how they think and feel
- 4.3.3 provide opportunities for sustained shared thinking with each child and young person and support the development of their language and communication skills
- 4.3.4 develop a culture and critically evaluate strategies to promote children and young people's positive wellbeing, self-esteem and independence
- 4.3.5 develop, implement and evaluate behaviour policies, systems, procedures and practices
- 4.3.6 promote children and young people's active participation in and responsibility for programme planning and delivery
- 4.3.7 enable constructive and sensitive feedback to and from children and young people to help them understand their ongoing growth, wellbeing and achievements
- 4.3.8 develop and make available resources to support activity programmes and their ongoing development, including family, community and educational resources
- 4.3.9 actively support strategies and activities which promote healthy behaviours and encourage healthy lifestyles of the children and young people with whom they work
- 4.3.10 value and support school education, employment, enterprise, training and other educational opportunities as part of activity programmes, as appropriate.

4.4 Practitioners engage in professional reflection for continuing improvement of practice.

They:

- 4.4.1 apply the skills and techniques of reflective practice to identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues
- 4.4.2 draw on a range of sources of evidence to question and be critical of practice and to support innovation and change
- 4.4.3 use critical reflection on practice to act on and improve their own practice and that of colleagues, taking account of the personal resilience required to work in often complex environments
- 4.4.4 understand that personal perspectives as well as professional perspectives influence reflection and are aware of and take account of these during the process of critical reflection
- 4.4.5 involve children and young people in critical reflection for continuing improvement of practice.

Communication, collaboration and partnership

4.5 Practitioners lead and support teamwork and collaboration.

They:

- 4.5.1 establish and develop a culture of collaboration and cooperative working between colleagues and with children and young people
- 4.5.2 critically engage with the concepts of leadership and management and recognise the capacity of all workers and children and young people to take on leadership roles
- 4.5.3 ensure that colleagues understand their role in the setting and when working with and across workplaces and across organisations
- 4.5.4 demonstrate their capacity to act as advocates on behalf of children and young people, including in relation to other agencies
- 4.5.5 demonstrate their ability to work together with colleagues and to support the participation of children and young people in policy development, the identification of examples of good practice and the establishment of a culture of continuous development and learning
- 4.5.6 engage effectively with colleagues and with children and young people to influence and shape the policies and practices of the workplace and promote a collective responsibility for their implementation.

4.6 Practitioners lead and support others in working with parents and carers, families and communities.

They:

- 4.6.1 recognise the rights and responsibilities of parents, carers, family, friends and other key people in children and young people's lives and can take account of these in their practice
- 4.6.2 work with and understand the dynamics of family relationships and can identify, analyse and take account of them according to the context of children and young people's circumstances
- 4.6.3 communicate sensitively and effectively with key people in children and young people's lives and in so doing ensure that their contributions are listened to and taken account of
- 4.6.4 demonstrate that they can involve and engage key people in children's lives and provide appropriate support for them to participate in improving outcomes for children and young people
- 4.6.5 establish effective partnerships with local and wider community groups and provide opportunities for children and young people to develop their understanding of community and how they can contribute as citizens.

4.7 Practitioners lead and collaborate with other agencies and relevant allied services to build capacity and develop services.

They:

- 4.7.1 enable workers in the service to understand how their service fits into the wider context of relevant allied services including adult care services, housing, social work, psychology, legal, health and education
- 4.7.2 are proactive in developing or contributing to integrated working and interprofessional collaborative practice with other professional workers and with agencies, networks and organisations in order to strengthen support for children and young people and their families and improve coordination across services
- 4.7.3 understand the role of the service and actively participate in and contribute to joint service planning with other agencies to build the capacity of services and develop them for the future
- 4.7.4 contribute to and where appropriate lead the work of a multi-professional team and coordinate and implement agreed programmes and interventions on a day-to-day basis.

4.8 Practitioners lead, coordinate and support care planning and progression.

They:

- 4.8.1 assess the strengths and needs of each child or young person, including any specialist needs and communication requirements and can identify and coordinate any specialist help required
- 4.8.2 lead the development of an agreed care plan for each child or young person that defines short and long term outcomes and includes an action plan for implementation
- 4.8.3 engage in the implementation of care plans by working with each child or young person, with key people, including parents and carers and with other services as appropriate
- 4.8.4 show a critical understanding of joint assessment, planning, review, outcome based and participatory evaluation, and information sharing and embed these processes in practice
- 4.8.5 use observation and other strategies to document and record children and young people's experiences, development and progress as their plans are implemented
- 4.8.6 respect confidentiality and share information appropriately, taking into account rights to confidentiality
- 4.8.7 have procedures in place for producing reports on each child's achievements and progress in line with organisational procedures and legal requirements
- 4.8.8 critically evaluate different models of assessment, recording and reporting.

4.9 Practitioners manage information and reporting.

They:

- 4.9.1 record written information with accuracy, clarity and relevance and with an appropriate level of detail, taking due account of confidentiality
- 4.9.2 produce and present written and oral reports that are well structured, convincingly argued and evidenced and technically accurate
- 4.9.3 use ICT for communicating, recording and reporting
- 4.9.4 evaluate the effectiveness of processes for sharing and reporting information and make appropriate changes in systems
- 4.9.5 maintain confidentiality at levels appropriate to the nature and purpose of records and reports and share information appropriately with children and young people
- 4.9.6 assist and advocate for children and young people at formal hearings and represent the service at other agencies' meetings, in court and in formal hearings.

4.10 Practitioners support and manage children and young people's transitions including throughcare and aftercare transitions.

They:

- 4.10.1 enable and support children and young people's planned and managed transitions between settings, providing relevant information to children and young people and to the key people with whom they have supportive relationships and working with other services as appropriate
- 4.10.2 actively involve and advocate for children and young people in decisions about transition, have confidence in and respect for their views and support their emotional wellbeing before and during the process
- 4.10.3 prepare children and young people for transitions by embedding relevant employability skills, educational experiences and independent living skills within the activity programme available in the setting
- 4.10.4 establish good links with services that children and young people move from and to
- 4.10.5 provide continuity of care, support and relationships during throughcare and aftercare processes
- 4.10.6 provide support for other children and young people in the setting affected by transitions
- 4.10.7 support and manage group dynamics as children and young people leave or come into the setting
- 4.10.8 when sought by young people, provide support subsequent to formal aftercare processes.

Leadership and management

4.11 Practitioners take responsibility for identifying and supporting their own personal learning and professional development needs.

They:

- 4.11.1 demonstrate the use of a range of routine communication, ICT and numeracy skills and some advanced and specialised skills to support their work with children and young people and wider professional activities
- 4.11.2 critically reflect on, review and evaluate their practice, modifying approaches where necessary and seeking feedback from colleagues and from children and young people
- 4.11.3 critically reflect, with support, on how life experiences and personal beliefs may affect their work and on how to actively manage their wellbeing in the workplace
- 4.11.4 take a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation and change and adapt their practice if benefits and improvements are identified

- 4.11.5 demonstrate the skills required to work in multi-professional teams and joint service planning and to develop personal networks
- 4.11.6 demonstrate their capacity to manage their own resources and to identify and undertake continuing professional development in areas such as peer review, mentoring and supervising, taking account of SSSC registration requirements
- 4.11.7 keep up-to-date records of their personal and professional development, in line with legal and work setting requirements.

4.12 Practitioners take responsibility for identifying and supporting the learning and professional development needs of workers for whom they are responsible and for supporting students learning in and through the workplace.

They:

- 4.12.1 establish effective working relationships with colleagues
- 4.12.2 create an environment for learning that enables and supports professional learning and where practice is valued and developed
- 4.12.3 encourage and facilitate others to reflect on existing and new principles and practice, to share knowledge and evaluate their learning
- 4.12.4 manage the quality of what workers do with children and young people and identify gaps in their professional learning
- 4.12.5 work with those workers for whom they are responsible to identify their continuing professional development needs and plan and coordinate the delivery of appropriate development opportunities and accredited learning programmes, while maintaining records and reports of development according to legal and work setting requirements
- 4.12.6 lead arrangements for the support, mentoring and supervision of students on work placements.

4.13 Practitioners take responsibility for the delivery and ongoing development of a high quality service for each child and young person.

They:

- 4.13.1 are able to use their understanding of relevant legislation and policy to establish a culture that promotes children's rights, equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of practice
- 4.13.2 seek to ensure that all workers and children and young people are aware of the core values, vision and culture of the service and have opportunities to contribute to sustaining and developing them
- 4.13.3 develop effective management and communication strategies so that each worker is clear about their role and responsibilities within the service

- 4.13.4 develop and maintain processes for developing, implementing and reviewing policies and operational plans for the service and for researching and evaluating innovation, impact and change
- 4.13.5 develop systems to support continuous quality improvement and effectiveness of the service for each child and young person and for the key people who support them
- 4.13.6 foster innovation and manage change
- 4.13.7 provide leadership, motivation and support to colleagues in ongoing self-evaluation
- 4.13.8 coordinate and support the revision of policies, procedures and practice for registration and inspection and be accountable for them
- 4.13.9 provide opportunities to share and contribute to the development of integrated services and joint planning of services with other agencies and the community.

4.14 Practitioners engage with the business management of the services they provide to a level appropriate to their role.

They:

- 4.14.1 develop procedures for effective administration of the service provided, including promoting the use of technology
- 4.14.2 have procedures in place to manage the physical resources of the service including the physical environment and health and safety
- 4.14.3 develop procedures for the safe selection, recruitment, induction and retention of workers
- 4.14.4 plan and control budgets, identifying and managing priorities and risks
- 4.14.5 undertake organisational and workforce development planning, taking account of the individual learning plans of workers
- 4.14.6 develop, implement and evaluate relevant business, operational and work plans as appropriate to their role.



Part two:

Guidelines for programmes leading to a degree level award in residential child care in Scotland

1 Purpose of these guidelines

1.1 These guidelines are intended to support:

- the development and delivery of programmes of learning that will enable participants to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills and values defined in the Standard for Residential Child Care
- the development of an integrated qualifications and professional development framework for practitioners in residential child care.

2 The policy context: a more highly qualified residential child care workforce

2.1 The Higher Aspirations, Brighter Futures: National Residential Child Care Initiative Overview (NRCCI report) (Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care, 2009)

The Higher Aspirations, Brighter Futures report said:

'The changing profile of children in residential care and the complexity of their needs demand an increasingly skilled, competent, confident and qualified workforce. Bringing about a culture change that recognises the strategic role of residential care and values its potential to make a real difference to the lives of children and young people requires greater aspirations for and expectations of the workforce. Residential staff with equal knowledge, skills, value and status as other professionals within the wider children's services workforce is essential to achieving this.

There can be few more important and challenging tasks than caring for some of the most vulnerable and troubled children and young people in our society. We must recognise the importance of this work in the aspirations we have for this workforce.

Given the increasingly complex needs of children and young people and the professional tasks that require high-level academic abilities, the workforce group believes that a minimum level of education at SCQF level 9 for workers, supervisors and managers would best equip them to undertake their work most effectively.'

2.2 The Scottish Government's response to the NRCCI report, 2009

The Scottish Government's response to the report said:

'We recognise that residential child care workers do demanding jobs and they need to be highly skilled, both to support the direct work they do with children and young people but also to ensure they are equipped to play a full role in the wider partnership necessary to meet needs holistically. Every other profession that works with children sees the value in having a highly qualified workforce. Residential child care workers need to be able to communicate with these professionals, on the same level, with the same status and professional respect. Having a workforce qualified to similar levels, with similar skills and professional values not only helps create trust between different professionals but has the potential to open up additional career opportunities between residential child care and other professions.'

2.3 Related initiatives and developments

These specific statements on the development of residential child care fit within a range of Scottish Government initiatives aimed at improving the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland.

- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006) wants all our children and young people to be fully supported as they grow and develop into successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. The approach is important for everyone who works with children and young people, as well as many people who work with adults who look after children. For practitioners it means putting the child or young person at the centre and developing a shared understanding within and across agencies. For managers it means providing leadership and strategic support to implement the changes in culture, systems and practice required.
- The Early Years Framework (Scottish Government, 2008) is about giving all our children the best start in life. It recognises the right of all young children to high quality relationships, environments and services which offer a holistic approach to meeting their needs. While it focuses on younger children many of the aspects of the framework are equally relevant to children and young people over the age of eight.
- Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Executive, 2004) aims to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum to ensure that all children and young people develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. The purpose of the curriculum is encapsulated in the four capacities to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.
- Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2012) describes the skills, knowledge and understanding and values that everyone should have if they work with children, young people and their families, whether they are paid or unpaid. The skills, knowledge and understanding are described as essential characteristics and are set out in two contexts; relationships with children, young people and families and relationships between workers. They are also explicitly cross-referenced to the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

3 The Standard for Residential Child Care

3.1 Purpose

The Standard specifies what is expected of a practitioner seeking registration with the SSSC as a worker/supervisor/manager in residential child care in Scotland.

The benchmarks of the Standard provide a set of statements that are the required outcomes of each programme of learning. The statements provide a means of describing the nature and characteristics of programmes of learning in residential child care that lead to awards made by providers of further and higher education in Scotland.

The information in the Standard specifies the values and personal commitment, knowledge and understanding and skills and abilities which programmes should address and assess. It describes the attributes and capabilities that those achieving such qualifications should be able to demonstrate.

3.2 The vision

The requirements of the Standard are based on a vision of practitioners in residential child care in Scotland who, having demonstrated the competences/ learning outcomes defined in the Standard, will:

- be competent and confident and working in partnership with others will ensure that children and young people cared for in a residential setting are safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included
- have the right knowledge, skills and values to provide the best possible care of children and young people
- respect and promote the rights of children and young people within a context of respect for human rights
- attract the best talent and make residential care a positive choice for both staff and those they care for
- be respected and recognised as champions for Scotland's children and young people who are looked after and able to influence policy and practice at national and local levels
- be seen and see themselves as an integral part of the wider children and young people's workforce.

In displaying these attributes practitioners will contribute effectively to the workplace by:

- building meaningful relationships based on trust, self-reflection and dialogue
- recognising the importance of communicating and listening
- providing leadership and working effectively in teams
- engaging and supporting young people as they grow and develop as individuals and as interdependent community members
- working in partnership with children and young people's parents, carers and other key people in their lives
- working in partnership with the other professionals in children and young people's lives.

3.3 National standards

The Standard is defined in terms of the descriptors of SCQF level 9 but also takes account of:

- the National Occupational Standards for Children's Care, Learning and Development (Skills for Care and Development, online)
- the National Occupational Standards for Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) (Skills for Care, online)
- the National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership (Skills for Care and Development, online)
- Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding, and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2012a)
- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006)
- Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Executive, 2004)
- National Care Standards: Care homes for children and young people (Scottish Government, 2011)
- National Residential Child Care Initiative: Higher Aspirations, Brighter Futures Workforce Report (Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care, 2009)
- National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2012b)
- the Standards for Social Work Education (Scottish Executive, 2003), Teaching (GTCS, 2012), and Childhood Practice (Scottish Social Services Council, 2015) and the Competences for Community Learning and Development (Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland, 2009)
- the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee's Enhancement Themes (Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee, 2014).

4 The nature and scope of the Standard

4.1 Professionalism

The Standard will support the establishment and recognition of the professional status of practitioners providing residential child care. It will inform an integrated qualification and professional development framework for residential child care and so impact on the professional development of all practitioners.

The new learning programmes based on the Standard will be designed to enhance and improve service standards. They will facilitate the development of the whole profession and in particular will support the development of workers, supervisors and managers who are:

- competent to work across a wide range of settings
- confident in what they know and can do
- clear about their own professional identity and that of other professionals
- flexible and adaptable
- committed to continuous improvement
- proactive in responding to and implementing change
- able to demonstrate leadership and vision
- able to contribute to the development of the profession.

The achievement of a minimum SCQF level 9 will ensure that practitioners:

- have a knowledge base with a critical understanding of theories and concepts relevant for the sector, as well as some areas of specialist knowledge informed by forefront developments
- apply this knowledge within a range of professional contexts, some of which may include a degree of unpredictability
- are equipped to draw from a range of sources when making judgements
- are able to present information to a range of audiences
- are able both to exercise autonomy and initiative in some areas of their work and also to work effectively as part of a team
- manage ethical and professional issues in accordance with current professional and/or ethical codes, practices or relevant ethical frameworks.

4.2 Expectations

The Standard consists of outcome statements which set out what learners must know, understand and be able to do to achieve the qualification. Programme providers must show that the programme they offer meets the requirements of the Standard.

The Standard does not set a national curriculum for programmes leading to the award of qualifications; it provides a specification against which providers are expected, as a minimum, to set their standards for an award. Programme and service providers are encouraged to work collaboratively in the design and delivery of programmes.

In accordance with the principles of the SCQF programmes should offer a flexible curriculum and should endeavour to avoid duplication of learning on the part of learners.

4.3 Level of performance

The Standard describes the minimum level of performance expected of learners who successfully complete a programme leading to an award.

Programmes should enable learners to achieve a threshold level of performance in relation to each of the benchmarks of the Standard and should allow the achievement of particular strengths in some of them. Programmes should also allow the development of skills in specific areas that can be transferred to other areas of professional practice or developed further through continuing professional development.

5 Programmes of learning leading to the Standard

5.1 Specification

The degree level award will be based on National Occupational Standards, include observed and assessed practice, be compliant with the SSSC Codes of Practice and be located within the SCQF.

5.2 The national learning context

Programmes of learning in residential child care will be framed by other strategic developments across the Scottish Government that focus on creating the best learning and caring contexts for all children and young people. These are in the Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values, Getting it right for every child and Curriculum for Excellence.

The organising principles for the implementation of the Standard for Residential Child Care will also take account of structural priorities in Scottish further and higher education proposed by Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council. These include strategic planning with partners that will give effect to:

- continued delivery of Opportunities for All
- improved progression in access level provision
- industry linked vocational provision with a focus on employment
- widened access to universities
- developing the extent to which students can transfer from college to university education
- a step change in the amount of articulation between colleges and universities.

Articulation within and across the further and higher education systems benefits when programmes of learning are:

- demand led
- built on existing structures
- shared between employers, providers and learners
- where possible, knowledge and skills are portable between sectors and services
- able to adapt and respond to developing circumstances.

Enabling articulation will be central to the structure of the degree level award in residential child care.

5.3 Definition of awards

Awards in higher and further education in Scotland are defined by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

- Within the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Scotland, bachelor degrees are defined as requiring at least 360 credits of which a minimum of 60 is at SCQF level 9. Typically the 360 credits will be gained during a programme of learning where learners have achieved 120 credits at each SCQF level 7, 8 and 9, totalling 360 SCQF credits.
- Within the Design Principles for Professional Development Awards of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Professional Development Awards (PDAs) can consist of programmes of learning where learners have undertaken 120 credits at each SCQF level 7, 8 and 9, a total of 360 SCQF credits.

Additionally, there is a range of postgraduate awards that require a degree or equivalent for entry.

- Graduate diplomas are defined as requiring at least 120 credits of learning assessed at the minimum of SCQF level 9.
- Postgraduate diplomas are defined as requiring 120 credits with a minimum of 90 credits at SCQF level 11.
- Masters awards are defined as requiring a minimum of 180 credits with a minimum of 150 credits at SCQF level 11.

Providers of programmes leading to awards will choose the route(s) best suited to their strengths and strategic focus.

The guidelines assume that all degree level awards in residential child care will explicitly include and assess learning that demonstrates achievement of all benchmarks of the Standard.

5.4 Qualifications and a professional development framework

In future, registration with the SSSC as a worker, supervisor or manager in residential child care will require a qualification that meets the Standard and has the appropriate volume of credit. The definition of the Standard for that qualification will therefore provide a benchmark for the development of an integrated qualifications and professional development framework that builds on existing qualifications at SCQF levels 7 and 8.

Programmes of learning such as Higher National Qualifications (HNQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) currently provide qualifications and continuing professional development for residential child care practitioners. They can contribute to the professional progress of practitioners towards a degree level award.

5.5 Work-based learning and professional development

Work-based learning means learning closely bound to the work role. An important aspect of work-based learning is that through the experience of performing the work role, complemented by other activities such as directed reading, research and group work, it is possible for learners to achieve planned learning outcomes that can be evidenced and assessed.

All programmes of learning that enable participants to demonstrate they have the professional knowledge, skills and values required of practitioners in residential child care will include learning that takes place in and through the workplace.

5.6 Requirements of all programmes

Programmes leading to registration by the SSSC must:

- allow learners to meet the Standard for practitioners in residential child care and assess their achievement of that Standard
- have an appropriate volume of learning credit
- be grounded in work-based learning, both current and planned
- have effective procedures for the recognition and accreditation of formal and experience based prior learning
- have an appropriate balance of learning related to professional knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities and values and personal commitment
- contain clear arrangements for updating in accordance with national developments
- have effective partnership arrangements with employers or workplace managers and, where appropriate, with other programme providers
- accept the need for flexibility in provision for learning and aim to take learning to the learners
- have appropriate arrangements for quality assurance.

5.7 Accessibility

Professional practitioners in residential child care work in a wide range of geographical locations in Scotland and in a variety of forms of service delivery. Programmes of learning will be required that are available to practitioners working or living in urban or rural environments and working in a range of settings.

Programmes should also be accessible to practitioners with disabilities.

5.8 The European context

Programmes of learning leading to the award of a Scottish bachelor degree conform to the requirements of the first cycle defined by the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the Bologna Process) and carry 180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. Learners achieving a bachelor degree are also entitled to be issued with the European Diploma Supplement.

The European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) will additionally allow the recognition of credit and credit transfer within the vocational education sector.

6 Delivering the Standard through an integrated qualifications framework

6.1 Attributes of the qualification framework

The main attributes of the qualification framework will be:

- there will be entry and exit points at each level
- there will be college, university and work-based provision
- prior learning will be recognised and accredited
- progression and continuing professional development will be supported
- the identification of a shared knowledge, skills and values base across children's services will be supported.

6.2 Characteristics of a degree level programme

A degree level programme will have a number of characteristics. These will include:

- contains at least 360 credits, with assessment at SCQF levels 7, 8 and 9
- learning will be closely bound to the work role
- procedures for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) will be integral
- the SCQF guidelines on credit rating, credit transfer and RPL will be used to support and to frame learning
- delivery will be based on partnerships between training providers and employers.

Postgraduate level programmes designed to meet the requirements of the Standard will have similar characteristics but will meet the credit and level requirements of the appropriate postgraduate award.

Implicit in these processes will be the acceptance of the need for flexibility on the part of the training providers who will aim to take learning to the learners.

6.3 Recruitment

Potential recruits will include the following.

- Practitioners already in post as managers without a recognised degree level award. The new degree level award requires staff to recognise and build on their existing qualifications and experience. As the new qualification structure comes into place this kind of provision may be a short-term programme.
- Practitioners already in post as workers or supervisors holding or working towards qualifications eligible for SSSC registration. These people will join a degree level award with already identified experience and competences.

- Direct entry candidates without existing awards at SCQF levels 7, 8, or 9.
- Direct entry candidates from other related/children's service workforces with relevant SCQF level 7, 8 or 9 qualifications eg social work, teaching, nursing, childhood practice, community learning and development.
- Direct entry candidates with other existing awards at SCQF level 9 or above eg in history, chemistry, media, international relations, psychology.

Recruits who already have a degree or equivalent may choose to enter a degree level programme or to follow a postgraduate route.

6.4 Possible forms of delivery of the complete framework

Among the possible forms of delivery of programmes to support the achievement of the Standard for Residential Child Care will be:

- degree level awards covering SCQF levels 7, 8, and 9
- degree level awards that build on candidates existing qualifications at SCQF levels 7, 8 or 9
- graduate diplomas or postgraduate diplomas/masters awards for candidates who already hold degrees or equivalent awards.

All routes to qualification can be part time or full time or a mix of both.

6.5 Collaboration

Delivery of programmes for practitioners will be through partnership arrangements by training providers with employers and workplace providers. Delivery may also involve partnership arrangements between a number of different training providers.

Within partnerships there must be joint planning of learning experiences with the roles and responsibilities of managers, tutors, assessors and learners clearly defined. This definition will normally take the form of a service level agreement.

The quality of the arrangements for partnerships will be kept under consideration by the partners through a process of ongoing self-evaluation and considered by the SSSC, both in its initial accreditation processes for awards and in subsequent reviews.

7 Learning, teaching and assessment

7.1 Principles

The organising principles for programmes leading to the qualification are that they will:

- be based on learning in and through the workplace and other practice settings
- be delivered through partnership, including people who use services
- provide flexible, responsive and adaptable opportunities for learning
- be challenging and stimulating
- provide effective support for learners.

7.2 Learning in and through workplace settings

Programmes for learners must include a minimum of two practice for learning experiences in different and distinct settings. The minimum amount of time in a placement workplace setting will depend on local circumstances but it should be of sufficient length to enable significant learning.

Programmes for learners already working in a residential child care setting and holding a qualification eligible for registration will require at least one additional learning experience in a residential child care setting other than their own workplace in order to achieve the qualification. Alternatively, the second learning experience could be in a related setting for Looked After Children.

It will be a requirement for approval that all programmes leading to the qualification in residential child care will include a substantial amount of learning time in workplace settings. The providing organisation's procedures for the RPL can contribute to this requirement.

It will be open to providers to use the arrangements for SVQs as part of the practice for learning element in their provision. Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services) SCQF level 9 modules might also be included. Consideration could also be given to the use of virtual learning environments as one of the means of providing learning through the workplace.

7.3 Assessment

All assessment should relate to learning outcomes defined by the Standard with a substantial proportion directly connected to learning in the workplace. Appropriate arrangements should be in place for the assessment of practice skills. Assessment procedures might include observation, reflective accounts, critical incident analyses, self and peer assessment, portfolios, learning contracts, case studies, projects and simulations. They might also include critical analyses based on reading or on lectures and tutorials. They might also make use of virtual learning environments.

It will be for the providers of programmes to propose forms of assessment that are appropriate to their particular methods of delivery.

The role of employers and placement supervisors and mentors in supporting assessment processes should be carefully considered. Their support will be central in contributing to the provision of an appropriate environment for the demonstration of the learning outcomes defined by the Standard and will be an important element in partnership arrangements. Supervisors and mentors will themselves require support.

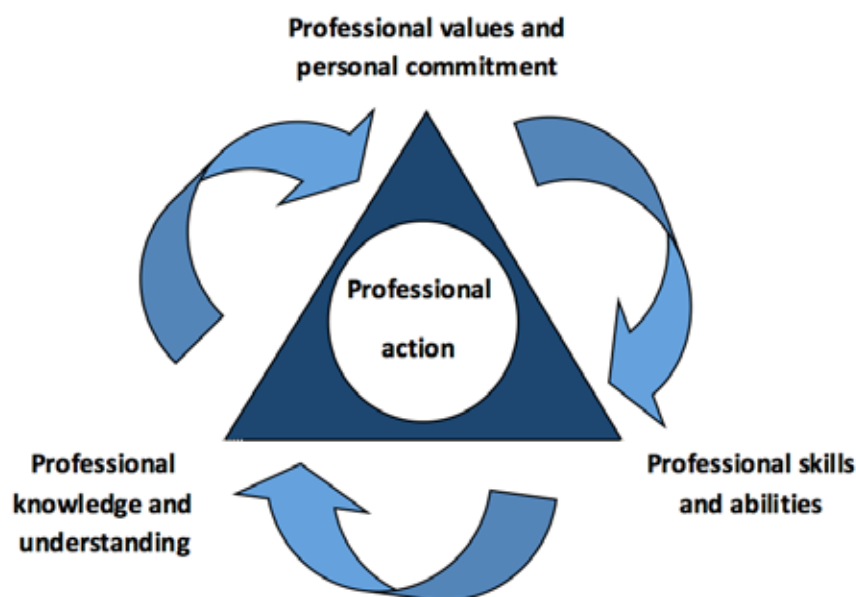
8 Professional development

8.1 Interrelationship of aspects of professional development

Programmes leading to the qualification for practitioners in residential child care will promote three main aspects of professional development:

- professional values and personal commitment
- professional knowledge and understanding
- professional skills and abilities.

The significance of placing these three aspects in a single structure is to emphasise that they are not simply lists of competences or outcomes. They inherently link to each other in the development of the professional and one aspect does not exist independently of the other two. It is the interrelationship among all three which develops professionalism and leads to appropriate professional action.



The design of each programme will offer a distinctive balance but will develop all three aspects.

8.2 Graduate level attributes

Programmes within the framework will help learners to develop graduate level attributes that are transferable to other areas of learning and other areas of professional employment. These attributes are not additional to the Standard but are implicit in the outcomes that successful learners will demonstrate.

8.3 A common format

The format of the Standard for Residential Child Care parallels that used for Standards in social work education, childhood practice and initial teacher education as well as comparable documents for nursing, midwifery and public health nursing and the competences for community learning and development. This allows for the identification of common elements in the training of these different professions and for the possibility of future integrated training initiatives.

9 Audience

9.1 We expect this statement of the Standard will be useful to:

- learners undertaking programmes
- employers and prospective employers
- corporate parents
- those involved in designing, approving, validating and accrediting programmes
- those who teach and assess in programmes
- those who are responsible for the assessment, review and monitoring of programmes
- those who are responsible for building opportunities for continuing professional development using the statements in this Standard, including training providers and awarding bodies
- members of other professions who have an interest in the delivery and development of residential child care, including the Care Inspectorate
- those with a responsibility for the development of policy, including Scottish Ministers
- parents and carers
- children and young people.

The Standard is also expected to inform provision and partnership by and between Scotland's universities and colleges, training providers, awarding bodies and public, private and voluntary sector employers. Partnerships for provision may engage any or all of these.

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