

Care Skillsbase: Manage Skills

Select a learning provider

Useful questions to ask when choosing a learning provider to deliver communication and number skills training may include some or all of the following:

- Does the learning provider employ instructors who are fully **qualified** to teach communication (including English language) and number skills?
- Can the learning provider access **government funding** to cover some or all of the cost of communication and number skills training?
- Does the learning provider hold any **quality awards**?
- Is the learning provider subject to any quality regulations? If so, when were they last **inspected** and what were the results of the inspection?
- Which **other employers** has the learning provider worked with recently?
- Has the learning provider worked with care organisations **similar** to yours?
- What **knowledge and/or experience** does the learning provider have of care work, care standards, care job roles and care qualifications?
- What **knowledge and/or experience** do the learning provider's instructors have of the care workplace?
- What happens if the learning provider's designated instructor **falls sick or leaves**?
- Is the learning provider willing and able to **tailor** a learning programme to your organisation's needs? If so, in what ways?
- How **flexible** is the learning provider when it comes to delivery? If pressure of work means you have to **postpone or cancel** a session, what happens?
- If your staff are **not happy** with any aspect of the programme, what happens?
- If you are **not happy** with any aspect of the programme, what happens?
- Can the learning provider offer learners recognised **national qualifications**? If so, which qualifications are on offer and what must learners do to gain a qualification?

- What information is the learning provider willing to **share** with you? What information does the learning provider treat as **confidential** to the learner?
- How does the learning provider **evaluate** their programmes?
- How does the learning provider **celebrate** successful learning?

Commissioning an external learning provider

If you decide to commission an external learning provider, make sure they understand:

- what outcomes you want to achieve
- what constraints your organisation is operating under (e.g. ability to release staff).

Learning providers who specialise in communication and number skills should be expert in helping adults to develop those skills. They will not, however, be experts in how your organisation works. Take the time to induct the learning provider and their instructors into your organisation's practices. In particular, make sure they understand how staff must apply communication and number skills in their work.

Agree with the learning provider how progress will be monitored, what feedback you expect and how the outcome of the programme will be evaluated. Ask the learning provider to feed back anything likely to help you improve workplace practices.

See the *Care Training Codes* for further guidance on external learning providers at www.skillsforcare.org.uk > qualifications & training > care training codes.

Check the UK Commission for Employment and Skills to find out employer information on this: <http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/employer-ownership-of-skills>