

Care Skillsbase: Manage Skills

Using a Skills Check for training

Skills Checks use short learning activities to help you judge whether staff have the communication and number skills their jobs require. Skills Check learning activities are written in plain English. They are addressed directly to the member of staff. Here is an example (from Skills Check 10) on challenging behaviour:

Behaviour can be a form of communication.

What feelings might these behaviours express?

1. A person won't look at you when you talk to them
2. Someone throws a cup at you
3. A person cries

These topic-based, user-friendly activities can be used for training purposes in a range of ways.

When?

- Induction training, training for H&SC qualifications
- Off-the-cuff training on specific issues
- Supervisions, appraisal meetings and other performance-related discussions
- Team meetings etc.

How?

- As a discussion prompt
- As a written exercise
- Done individually, in pairs or as a group.

Why?

- To address a topic in a structured way, raising awareness of
 - > the needs of people who use services
 - > the organisation's policies and procedures
 - > national standards of safety and quality (see also the Compare Standards area of the Care Skillsbase website at www.scie.org.uk/careskillsbase)
 - > the knowledge and skills (particularly the communication and number skills) that staff need to apply in the topic area.
- To help staff to reflect on and standardise their own practice
- To help a member of staff follow a particular procedure correctly
- To find out what staff already know/think about the topic at the start of a training session, supervision, appraisal or team meeting etc.
- To find out what staff have learned at the end of a training session, briefing etc.
- To check that staff have the literacy, English language and number skills to understand/benefit from training, health and social care qualifications, etc.

Quick guide to using a Skills Check learning activity for training

Step 1 Understand how Skills Checks work

Skills Checks cover four different skill areas. Here is how they work.

Type of Skills Check			
Spoken communication	Reading	Writing	Number skills
↓	↓	↓	↓
Short texts/images on care work topics, e.g. challenging behaviour, followed by discussion questions	Short texts/images on care work topics, e.g. health and safety, followed by comprehension questions	Short texts/images on care work topics, e.g. incident reports, followed by writing tasks	Short texts/images presenting number skills problems related to care work tasks, e.g. recording fluid intake
↓	↓	↓	↓
Staff consider texts/images, then discuss	Staff answer comprehension questions, then discuss	Staff complete writing tasks, then discuss	Staff complete problems, then discuss

Each Skills Check has a main topic indicated by its title, e.g. Skills Check 8. 'Safety Information'. Learning activities within the Skills Check cover one or more sub-topics, e.g. fire safety.

For training purposes you may wish to use all of the learning activities in a Skills Check together or just use one on its own.

Step 2 Identify Skills Check learning activities relevant to the training topic

A full list of Skills Check topics and sub-topics appears at the end of this resource.

Step 3 Review the Skills Check learning activities

Ensure the learning activities you plan to use are suitable for staff and for your organisation (including its policies and procedures).

Be sure you understand how the learning activities work so that you can explain the instructions and answer any questions from staff. For each learning activity question, decide what you think would be a good answer. (Please note that answers are included for all Skills Checks involving number problems.)

Step 4 Be clear about the training outcome you are seeking and how the learning activity will help you achieve it

Consider

- how the Skills Check learning activities will aid your training
- what you want staff to gain from the learning activities
- how you will introduce the learning activities
- how you will conclude the learning activities.

You will find information about how each Skills Check relates to the Common Induction Standard (CIS) and the Diploma in Health & Social Care in the Check Skills area of this resource.

Index of Skills Checks

(Please note that Skills Checks for personal assistants are not included in this index.)

Main topic	Skills Check*
*(S) Spoken communication (R) Reading (W) Writing (N) Number	
Talking about the principles of care	1 (S)
Reading about the principles of care	2 (R)
Working together	3 (S)
Health and safety responsibilities	4 (R)
What is effective communication	5 (S)
Preventing abuse and neglect	6 (R)
Developing yourself	7 (S)
Safety information	8 (R)
Care plans	9 (R)
Different ways people communicate feelings	10 (S)
Understanding written policies	11 (R)
How to deal with complaints	12 (S)
Filing records	13 (R)
Reporting an incident	14 (W)
Making an entry in the communications book	15 (W)
Writing a formal letter	16 (W)
Recording information on charts	17 (N)
Using numbers in care work (A)	18 (N)
Using numbers in care work (B)	19 (N)
Using numbers in office work	20 (N)
Using numbers in ancillary work	21 (N)
Briefing colleagues on policies and procedures	22 (R)
Supervising staff	23 (S)
Interacting with people from other cultures	24 (S)
Speaking politely	25 (S)

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(Index of Skills Check continued)

Main topic	Skills Check*
*(S) Spoken communication (R) Reading (W) Writing (N) Number	
Organising staff rotas	26 (N)
Following travel directions	27 (S)
Supervision notes	28 (W)
Responding to concerns and complaints	29 (S)
Reading signs	30 (R)
Your role at work	31 (S)
Personal development	32 (R)
Communicate effectively	33 (S)
Equality and inclusion	34 (R)
Duty of care	35 (R)
Safeguarding	36 (S)
Person-centred care and support	37 (R)
Health and safety in adult social care	38 (S)

Index of Skills Check learning activity topics

(Please note that Skills Checks for personal assistants are not included in this index.)

Skills Checks for communication skills

Learning activity topic	Skills Check*
*(S) Spoken communication (R) Reading (W) Writing	
Abuse and neglect	
Types of abuse and neglect	6 (R), 36 (S)
What to do about abuse and neglect	6 (R), 36 (S)
Care partnership, the	3 (S)
Care plans (personal)	9,37 (R)

(Continues)

(Index of Skills Check learning activity topics continued)

Skills Checks for communication skills

Learning activity topic	Skills Check*
*(S) Spoken communication (R) Reading (W) Writing	
Care records	
Alphabetical filing of care records	13 (R)
Care worker's responsibility for records	31 (S)
Importance of up-to-date care records	13 (R)
Communication	
Barriers to communication and how to overcome them	5, 33 (S)
Body language	10 (S)
Challenging behaviour	10 (S)
Communication between care workers	15 (W), 31(S)
Reading facial expressions	10 (S)
How to promote good communication	10, 33 (S)
Types of communication	5, 33 (S)
Communications book, how to make an appropriate entry	15 (W)
Complaints	
Need to understand complaints	12 (S)
Complaints procedures	22 (R), 29 (S)
Responding to complaints from colleagues	12 (S)
Responding to complaints from people who use services	12, 29, 36 (S)
Why some service users find it difficult to complain	29 (S)
Confidentiality	2, 11 (R), 33 (S)
Culture	
Influence of culture on behaviour	24, 25 (S)
Problems in direct care from cultural differences	24, 25 (S)
Directions, giving and receiving	27 (S)
Disciplinary issues	23 (S)

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(Index of Skills Check learning activity topics continued)

Skills Checks for communication skills	
Learning activity topic	Skills Check*
*(S) Spoken communication (R) Reading (W) Writing	
Discrimination	34 (R)
Diversity	34 (R)
Duty of care	35 (R)
Equality & inclusion	2 (R), 24, 25 (S) 34 (R)
Feedback, giving ~ to staff	23 (S)
Fire safety	8 (R)
Gifts and money, rules for accepting	11 (R)
GSCC codes	3 (S), 22 (R)
Health and safety	38 (S)
Health and safety law	4 (R)
Incident reports	
Completing incident reports	14 (W)
How incident reports support communication	14 (W)
How your organisation reports incidents	14 (W)
Infection control	38 (S)
Information, need to disseminate	22 (R)
Learning and development, personal development	
Help from supervisors	7 (S)
Ways to learn	7 (S), 32 (R)
How learning helps to improve services	7 (S)
Letter-writing, for a service-user to a mail-order company	16 (W)
Map, plotting a route on	27 (S)
Moving and positioning	38 (S)
Person-centred care	1 (S), 2 (R), 33, 36 (S), 37 (R)

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(Index of Skills Check learning activity topics continued)

Skills Checks for communication skills	
Learning activity topic	Skills Check*
*(S) Spoken communication (R) Reading (W) Writing	
Policies, need to know about	11 (R)
Politeness	
Politeness and respect	25 (S)
Politeness in different cultures	25 (S)
Giving instructions politely	25 (S)
Using politeness to avoid misunderstandings	25 (S)
Principles of care	1 (S), 2, 35 (R)
Procedures, importance of following	31 (S)
Protecting vulnerable people	6 (R)
Qualifications, value of	7 (S)
Quality in care	1 (S)
Rapport with staff, building	23 (S)
Requests, making ~ politely to supervisors	25 (S)
Risk assessment/management	4, 35 (R)
Safeguarding	36 (S)
Signs	
Different kinds of safety signs	8 (R)
Different kinds of domestic signs	30 (R)
Shift handover	15 (W)
Standards in care (including induction standards)	1 (S), 31 (S), 37 (R), 38 (S)
Supervision	
Impact of supervision	23 (S)
Supervision questions	23 (S)
Writing up supervision notes	28 (W)

(Continues)

(Index of Skills Check learning activity topics continued)

Skills Checks for number skills

Learning activity topic	Skills Check*
*(N) Number skills	
Administer a vitamin supplement	18 (N)
Agency staff hours	20 (N)
Calculating pay	18, 19, 20 (N)
Change from shopping	19 (N)
Charts and graphs for fluid intake, weight, body temperature	17 (N)
Check pill supply	19 (N)
Complete time sheets	19, 20 (N)
Cups needed for coffee round	18, 21(N)
Dilute chemicals	19, 21 (N)
Ensure enough qualified staff are on duty	18 (N)
Fridge temperatures	21 (N)
Hours and costs of staff rotas	26 (N)
Manage petty cash	20 (N)
Order supplies	18, 20, 21 (N)
Plan an activity for people who use services	18 (N)
Plan work	18, 20, 21 (N)
Schedule maintenance	19 (N)
Schedule meetings	20 (N)
Shift hours	21 (N)
Supplies needed	21 (N)
Take stock of supplies	18 (N)