

Developing a Pilot Scheme for Accrediting Community Development Work Practice *Supporting Material*



www.EnglandStandardsBoard.org.uk

esb@fcdl.org.uk

Supporting Material

Research Details and Accreditation Model Details

This folder contains details of some of the research material gathered during this project to support the model created. It also contains the detailed documentation that is required to deliver this model in practice.

Contents

1. From the research findings

- 1.1 Resourcing issues which need to be addressed in the design of any scheme.
- 1.2 Awarding Bodies
- 1.3 Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)
- 1.4 The European dimension
- 1.5 References and useful web sites

2. Documentation and materials to support the accreditation scheme delivery

2.1 Publicity

- 2.1.1 Open Days / Workshops
- 2.1.2 Publicity, promotion and marketing
- 2.1.3 Guidance notes for employers

2.2 Determining readiness for accreditation

- 2.2.1 Self-assessment.
- 2.2.2. Personal Development Plans
- 2.2.3 Accreditation of prior learning
- 2.2.4 Completion of application
- 2.2.5 Individual Interviews – Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Adviser
- 2.2.6 Report of interview– format and content
- 2.2.7 Report to the accreditation centre

2.3 Stages of the Accreditation Scheme

- 2.3.1 Starting the Accreditation Scheme - support
- 2.3.2 Compiling the evidence for accreditation
- 2.3.3 Extension of mentor support/ time - extenuating circumstances
- 2.3.4 Initiating the assessment process
- 2.3.5 The assessment panel
- 2.3.6 Interview with the Participant's colleagues
- 2.3.7 The assessment report - findings and recommendations.
- 2.3.8 Appeals procedure

3. Assessment strategy

- 3.1 Underpinning principles (in brief)
- 3.2. Key principles (unpacked)
 - 3.2.1. Starting with practice
 - 3.2.2. Relationship to the National Occupational Standards in Community Development Work
 - 3.2.3 Empowerment: relating practice and theory in a formative way
 - 3.2.4 The portfolio and the nature of evidence
 - 3.2.5 Quality and quantity in assessment
 - 3.2.6 Equivalence and progression
 - 3.2.7 Assessment at different levels: ensuring reflection and reflexivity
 - 3.2.8 What to assess
 - 3.2.9. Assessment approach and methods
 - 3.2.10 The relationship between the Participant and the groups worked with
 - 3.2.11 Practical skills
 - 3.2.12 Transferable skills
 - 3.2.13 Knowledge and understanding of community development theory
 - 3.2.14 Knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities
 - 3.2.15 Ability to relate practice to theory
 - 3.2.16 Wider societal awareness and understanding
 - 3.2.17 Portfolio
 - 3.2.18 Formative and summative assessment and the role of the mentor
 - 3.2.19 The final assessment panel

4. Sample job descriptions

- 4.1 Job description - Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) worker
- 4.2 Job description - Mentor
- 4.3 Job descriptions for Assessor
- 4.4 Job description Scheme Co-ordinator

5. Sample application forms for mentors

6. The Content Of Training Programmes

Section 1 - From the research findings

This section records some of the findings gathered during the research that informed the development of the model.

1.1 Resourcing issues which need to be addressed in the design of any scheme

1.1.1 A 'bank' of Community Development Work Assessors

The accreditation centre(s) will need to develop and build up a 'bank' of assessors that have the relevant Community Development Work experience, skills and knowledge to ensure that quality and standards are rigorously maintained. We believe that there are workers out 'in the field' who have the range of experience necessary to be trained up to work with accreditation centres to deliver a good quality route to qualification. We are clear that people who have only community experience in one particular geographical or interest area would not qualify at this stage to become an assessor on the Community Development Work Accreditation Scheme. The Community Development Work assessor must have a wide range, length and depth of experience in working with groups in communities and networks, to be able to assess and verify Participant's experience at many different levels.

1.1.2 Resources and Funding

Only Centres that are registered as LSC Approved Providers (i.e. have successfully completed the PQQ and gained approval) can currently deliver on government funded initiatives such as Train to Gain.

Even those with Approved Providers (AP) status may only be able to deliver as partners in the very large tenders that are 'let' by LSC (unless the organisation is large enough itself to tender for sub regional contracts across a wide range of priorities). This means that the lead organisation will always 'top slice' the funding for delivery, although some funding would be available at level 2 and particularly for those defined as 'hard to reach'.

The qualification could attract mainstream LSC funding if it was on the Qualifications Framework and delivered by an organisation that can draw down LSC funding (many smaller and voluntary sector training providers cannot access LSC funding either directly or through local colleges who themselves have cut back on post 19 education, even in some cases where organisations have approved provider status).

1.2 Awarding Bodies

1.2.1 Open College Network

OCN were very keen to explore the development of further Community Development Work awards. They had no problem concerning different / innovative methods of delivery and were very open to a purely Portfolio based assessment method of submission.

They would not want to see duplication, including the development of further units that are too similar to existing regional or national units. However, the Community Development Work Accreditation Scheme would be using existing National Occupational Standards and would not be developing 'new units'.

1.2.2 National Council for Further Education (NCFE)

The response from NCFE was very similar to that of OCN except that they do not currently have a Community Development Award so duplication would be less of an issue.

1.2.3 City & Guilds

City and Guilds would in principle consider the development of an entirely Portfolio based award/

qualification. However this would be subject to certain considerations:

- That the need was clearly defined – with a clearly identified ‘client group’ including an estimate of prospective take up based on solid research, particularly as the current Community Development Work NVQs have a low take up.
- A good business case is submitted – however cost wouldn’t necessarily be a determining factor if for example a ‘niche market’ was identified which is not served by existing qualifications/awards as they are in some way unsuitable.
- It would need to be substantially different to existing qualifications i.e. may be similar in content to the NVQ but with different assessment methods.
- Qualifications Curriculum Authority (QCA) and City & Guilds are currently ‘culling’ qualifications where they identify duplication between qualifications/awards.
- Endorsement for the development of the qualification/award would need to be endorsed by LLUK in order to be included in the Qualifications Framework (see below). They are not likely to do so without a good rationale of why it is needed and why it is substantially different from the NVQ or any other Community Development Work award.

1.3 Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)

Lifelong Learning UK is the Sector Skills Council responsible for workforce development, assessing qualifications, training and the National Occupational Standards for education and learning for organisations throughout the UK.

The national accreditation centre and ESB could apply to LifeLong Learning UK (LLUK) to ensure the Accreditation Scheme meets the National Occupational Standards and to provide national recognition of the Scheme within the wider educational and community networks. Endorsement by LLUK of the Community Development Work Award would ensure that the qualification would be included in the National Qualification Framework.

“As a general principle we would want to see the development of qualifications that met the frameworks of all four nations based on NOS for Community Development Work, which are under review. At the same time Qualifications Frameworks are also currently undergoing changes.

The Qualification and Credit Framework proposed for England and to be adopted in Wales and Northern Ireland will be populated by units of assessment.

These will then be formed into qualifications based on NOS, if appropriate, and Rules of Combination. Units will have a level, a credit value and learning outcomes and assessment criteria. It will be the role of the Awarding Bodies to develop qualifications on these.

The new Framework, does not talk about ‘types’ of qualification at the moment, but the possibility of ‘brands’ so there may be no NVQ’s as a type of qualification, but the NVQ may remain as a brand.

This is being reviewed in the second year of the Evaluation of the QCF and will be published in the Spring by QCA. The reason for this is to prevent proliferation of qualifications but it does allow for different assessment methodologies being employed on the same units populating the NQF.

What we are hoping to do with Youth Work, now that the Professional and National Occupational Standards have been approved is to work with all interested stakeholders, that is the Regulatory Bodies, the Awarding Bodies, Trades Unions, Employers, Representative Organisations and Youth Workers across all four nations in both statutory sector and voluntary sector to work together to create a suite of qualifications from level 1 to level 8 that meet the requirements of the new frameworks and the sector to enable this.”

1.4 The European dimension

Work on the standardisation of qualifications across Europe is at a very early stage. For the foreseeable future member countries will continue to independently develop their own qualifications and awards.

Some investigation has taken place on different levels but these are so different across Europe (even Ireland has 12 levels) that comparison is not realistic. Very recently work has started on the development of a broad framework to enable employers to recognise the English equivalent of EU qualifications. This will be a similar system to UK NQF which currently interprets qualifications to find their equivalent in the UK (this has been used for various professions e.g. doctors, teachers etc).

In the longer term – a ‘Euro Pass’ will enable individuals to formally map their qualifications to equivalents in other member countries and gain a form of certification to confirm this to present to prospective employers in other EU countries.

However City & Guilds felt that these schemes are very much in their infancy so it is not viable to take into consideration when developing qualifications/awards at present.

Commentary

Awarding Bodies are becoming less inclined to recognise new qualifications/awards that are not substantially different in content to their existing qualifications. In particular City and Guilds have identified low take up of the NVQ so would need to be presented with a very good case to accredit another qualification. This is also true of LLUK and QCA re another qualification on the Qualifications Framework.

Taking into consideration LLUK’s comments above, a ‘brand’ could be created using a new assessment methodology.

The National and Local / Regional Centres could work with all Awarding Bodies to ensure that the Community Development Work Accreditation Scheme is put forward for endorsement at levels 3 -7.

Engage the support of LLUK to continue research and present a good business case for a completely new qualification/award which will be placed on the Qualifications Framework.

Redevelop an existing award that is already on the qualifications framework to ‘fit’ our specifications (i.e. create a new ‘brand’). It would be almost impossible to do this with the NVQ as the assessment strategy is always very specific – however it may be worth considering substantial changes to the NOCN award to make this more ‘fit for purpose’. The disadvantage of this is that the NOCN awards currently have a rather ambivalent status – particularly with employers and particularly re their status as ‘an award but not quite a qualification’.

1.5 References and useful websites

CDF/ Department of Communities and Local Government (2006) ‘The Community Development Challenge’ Communities and Local Government Publications

Communities and Local Government (2007) An Action Plan for Community Empowerment, C& LG Publications

Communities and Local Government (2008) Community Empowerment White Paper Communities and control: Real people, real power

Home Office (2004) Firm Foundations: The Government’s Framework for Community Capacity Building, Home Office

www.takepart.org/framework-4-active-learning

Federation for Community Development Learning web site: www.fcdl.org.uk

England Standards Board for Community Development Work Training and Qualifications
www.englandstandardsboard.org.uk

Section 2 - Documentation and materials to support the accreditation scheme delivery

2.1 Publicity

2.1.1 Open Days / Workshops

Throughout the year, Open Days / Workshops to be run in different regions.

Suggestions for workshop agenda:

- Determining expectations
- Determining level of entry
- Peer support
- Re-examining personal development plan, goals and action plan
- Determining learning styles, learning needs
- Preparing Portfolio
- Time management – preventing 'burn-out'
- Determining and harnessing resources needed
- Gaining management support
- Theory to practice, anti-oppressive practice/equality issues.

2.1.2 Publicity, promotion and marketing

Accessible publicity material and information will be available to all applicants interested in learning about the Accreditation Scheme. Pro-active marketing will take place at local, regional, national and international community events, conferences and workshops organised by FCDL and other relevant bodies, using a wide range of multi-media approaches to publicity, promotion and marketing.

The Information Pack will contain booklets on:

- 'What is Community Development Work'? – The Definition
- 'What is Accreditation'? An explanation of The Scheme
- 'Who can apply' - to offer hints to enable people to decide if accreditation is the relevant and appropriate route for them and how to prepare for interview
- Application form – with details of criteria and evidence needed for completion
- Personal Development Plan – see below for link.

The Pack will also:

- Explain the purpose of:
 - i. The Community Development Work National Occupational Standards
 - ii. The England Standards Board
 - iii. Federation for Community Development Learning
 - iv. Community Development Exchange (CDX)
 - v. Community Development Foundation
- Cover possible questions and answers that applicants may have.
- Provide details of the appeals procedure (throughout the Accreditation Scheme).
- Have an example of a Personal Development Plan (PDP – see link below).
- Examples of 'Learning Sets' needed to complete at certain Levels.

2.1.3 Guidance notes for Employers

The role of the employer is a key element to the Scheme, as a beneficiary of the results of the Accreditation Scheme and also because of their part in supporting their worker as they go through the process. Workers need to be assured that their employer is aware of the implications for them and that they value and recognise this route as a valid accreditation pathway.

Employers will need to know:

- How they can participate in the Scheme – for instance by working in partnership or offering in-kind contributions
- About the benefits of this opportunity to their organisation
- Why they need to supply a reference which relates to a number of areas, including the work which has been undertaken by their member of staff
- How this route is a development opportunity for their workers
- How their awareness could be raised in terms of the validity of this route and the progression opportunities that arise from it
- Agreement on issues of worker boundaries and confidentiality associated with the Portfolio of evidence being provided by the Participant
- Any possible cost implications to them for their worker's involvement in this learning opportunity.

2.2 Determining readiness for accreditation

2.2.1 Self-assessment

Evaluation and recognition of self; the Scheme will enable experienced people to 'locate themselves' with regard to their own learning, skills and experience e.g. newly paid/unpaid workers working in communities may not yet be thinking of themselves as Community Development Workers. We acknowledge that some may be extremely experienced (without academic qualifications) or they may have academic qualifications in a variety of subjects (and little experience).

Accreditation gives positive value and recognition to the learning and experience of those new to the concept of Community Development Work and also people with many years of 'unqualified' experience.

2.2.2. Personal Development Plans (PDP)

This will provide a Framework for individuals to go through the Scheme of personal development planning. An example that could be adapted to suit Community Development Work pathways is: www.learning-forces.org.uk

2.2.3 Accreditation of prior learning - AP(E)L & APL - applicants may be able to negotiate prior Community Development Work experience and/or training towards accreditation at specific Levels to determine the 'starting point' for accreditation (to be agreed at Initial Interview) e.g.

- Level 3, 4 – Community Work Skills Portfolio/ Open College Network courses
- Level 5, 6, 7 – College/University courses.

2.2.4 Completion of application form

Application forms are seen by the Accreditation Scheme Co-ordinator and will be checked to ensure that all the relevant information has been provided. If there are any queries, the Co-ordinator will contact the applicant for this. Copies of the application form will be sent to an IAG Adviser to arrange an Interview.

2.2.5 Individual interviews – Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Adviser

A 'bank' of trained, experienced Community Development workers will be available to provide Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to all applicants.

The adviser will go through the application form and PDP with the applicant and

- Talk about the criteria for assessment
- Agree the Level the applicant may be at (also if previous experience can be used)
- Check out what type of support may be needed/available i.e. from colleagues, employer, other (if any) particularly identifying any practical issues relating to accessibility (if person is disabled, English not first language) etc.

- Look at timescales needed to complete
- Discuss if the applicant has secured all resources needed prior to starting
- The Adviser will mention useful networks, information and contacts and signpost applicants to existing learning opportunities in the local/regional/national/international networks and recommend whether the applicant joins the Scheme or not.

2.2.6 Report of interview– format and content

The IAG Adviser will write a Report, which will either:

- Agree that the applicant is ready to proceed to accreditation
- Defer - Suggest that the applicant 'defer' their application, it may be that they need to get further experience or training or they need further evidence. Both the applicant and IAG adviser may decide that the Accreditation Scheme is not the appropriate route for the applicant and the adviser may suggest other more appropriate qualifications. Where there is disagreement, refer to the Appeal Procedure.
- Refuse the application, usually because the applicant does not have the relevant experience to continue further. The appeals procedure is available if necessary.

The Report will outline the Scheme carried out at the interview, the discussion taken place and the recommendations to the accreditation centre and reasons for these.

2.2.7 Report to the accreditation centre

The Centre looks at the Report and discusses if it meets the criteria and makes their decision. If the decision is to:

- Defer; if the applicant has further learning/experience needs prior to consideration, the adviser may offer to approach the applicant's employer and request that they provide relevant opportunities for them to gain the missing learning/experience needed, or alternatively may recommend where this training/learning is available
- Refuse; the Adviser will give their reasons for this and possible suggestions as to other routes to qualification that are more appropriate
- Accept; the Adviser will outline that they agree the applicant has met the criteria and will recommend to the Accreditation Centre that the applicant is offered a place on the Scheme. (Once accepted, will become known as 'Participant').

The Scheme Co-ordinator will send a copy of the Report to the applicant and let them know the decision as soon as possible.

2.3 Stages Of The Accreditation Scheme

2.3.1 Starting the Accreditation Scheme - support

The Participant will discuss/meet with the Scheme Co-ordinator to discuss:

- What support, resources they need (if can be provided)
- Arrangements for providing a mentor
- Arrangements for paying fees, which should be as flexible as possible.

2.3.2 Compiling the evidence for accreditation

The mentor will have extensive Community Development Work experience to guide the Participant throughout the Scheme. They will provide advice and support as necessary to ensure that the evidence required is provided in an agreed format.

Evidence can be presented in a variety of different ways e.g. to include visual (photos), electronic (DVD, CD), portfolio (written evidence at all level is required).

Learning Sets can be used to enable Participants to compile their evidence and the mentor will support them in this.

2.3.3 The Portfolio is completed and has been agreed as ready for presentation for assessment.

2.3.4 Extension of mentor support/ time - extenuating circumstances

There may be some occasions where a Participant could negotiate extra time with their mentor due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. personal problems) where the Participant and mentor agree that further time is needed to complete the Portfolio. The mentor would support the Participant to make a case to apply for this to the accreditation centre. The mentor will discuss extra costs this will incur and the Participant will meet the Centre Co-ordinator to arrange for payment before they can continue towards completion.

2.3.5 Initiating the assessment process

The Scheme Co-ordinator sends copies of the completed evidence portfolio to The Panel for assessment. The evidence is assessed against the Community Development Work National Occupational Standards and assessment criteria at each Level.

2.3.6 The assessment panel

The panel will consist of men and women with a wide range of experiences that are from different backgrounds and cultures.

The mentor will act as 'advocate' for the Participant with the Panel, but will not write or present the findings and recommendations of the panel report to the accreditation centre.

The Panel will review the Evidence / Portfolio and:

- a. Decide questions to ask the Participant at Interview.
- b. Contact colleagues/referees to confirm meeting/contact.
- c. Contact other relevant parties to confirm evidence within the Portfolio.
- d. Decide who is to write report/present report to accreditation centre

2.3.7 Interview with the Participant's colleagues. The Scheme Co-ordinator will arrange for assessors to visit the Participant's work place to confirm evidence presented and have access to colleagues and referees who have a good knowledge of their work. A record will be taken of this evidence and included in the assessor panel report.

2.3.8 The assessment report - findings and recommendations

Writing the assessment report - the panel member (not the mentor) writes the Report within the format and structure agreed.

Presenting the assessment report – The Panel member (not the mentor) presents the Report to the accreditation centre and answers any questions raised.

The assessment panel has 3 decisions at its disposal:

- Accepted – Participant receives an award according to their Level of experience
- Deferred – The panel will provide details of why the Participant has not fulfilled the criteria at this time and will make recommendations to what further evidence may be required with

regard to their 'gaps' in learning/experience. This would need to be negotiated as to further needs identified and costs/time incurred

- Refused – The Panel detail their recommendation and why this decision has been made.

The accreditation centre receives the Panel of assessors Report and agrees to:

- Issue the award/certificate or
- Defer a decision till further evidence is provided or
- Refuse the award – agrees the Participant has not met the criteria.

2.3.9 Appeals Procedure

An appeals procedure will be available at all stages of the Scheme with full information given in the Information Pack. The appeals panel will be external to the original assessment panel and will oversee any appeals to ensure impartiality as appropriate.

Section 3 - Assessment strategy

3.1 Underpinning Principles (in brief)

- Based on practice
- Rigorous - closely inter-related to NOS
- Empowering
- Involving some form of Portfolio
- Collective- embodying a peer/community (and if appropriate, employer) perspective
- Not too bureaucratic or time-consuming
- Offering assessment at different levels (3-7) and progression routes to other qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework

3.2. Key Principles (unpacked)

3.2.1. Starting with practice

This pilot Scheme is intended to meet the needs for accreditation of experienced workers, paid and unpaid, who have no or few formal qualifications. This assessment strategy therefore, first needs to take account of the starting points of applicants and focus on their past and developing Community Development practice. It then needs to assess (and give credit to) their experience of working in communities and the skills, knowledge and understanding they have developed from their work and life experience.

3.2.2. Relationship to the National Occupational Standards in Community Development Work

The NOS have been developed over time by experienced Community Development workers in the field of Community Development Work and are recognised by Lifelong Learning UK, the relevant sector skills council. They consist of key values, practice principles and identified roles and skills for Community Development practice. As such, they form a central reference point for any assessment strategy and a key indicator of rigour in assessment. The assessment strategy will be based on an active and critical engagement with the National Occupational Standards and learning outcomes will be assessed against the National Occupational Standards.

Participants' practice is based on a range of personal principles and informal theories, some of which may be based on the National Occupational Standards, some of which may be more personal and may not be fully acknowledged or explicit. A recurring and underpinning part of the assessment process and a key part of critical review and analysis will be an assessment of an informed, critical and supported dialogue between the Participant and the mentor in relation to the National Occupational Standards through the process of documenting and analysing that practice.

Assessment will not only consist of judging the mapping of experience, skills and knowledge against the National Occupational Standards, it will also allow Participants to identify and review their own practice, guiding values and principles and skills in relation to the National Occupational Standards. The Participant will be expected to show evidence that s/he has engaged actively and critically with the National Occupational Standards' values and practice principles and depending on level, can demonstrate experience of the relevant roles identified at that level [cf assessment of work-based learning in certain Foundation Degrees in Community Development Work]. Core aspects of NOS roles and skills, where Participants need to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding, will be identified for every level.

However engagement with (some) new or unfamiliar (optional) roles or skills in the National Occupational Standards will be part of a formative assessment process to complement an initial mapping of experience and a later summative analysis and assessment of that experience.

3.2.3 Empowerment: relating practice and theory in a formative way

The whole Scheme is intended to be empowering, therefore the starting point will be Participants' practice. They will be asked to identify, review and evaluate their skills, knowledge and experience of working in groups and communities.

The assessment strategy will embody a formative dimension (involving mentor support) which will pay particular attention to how that practice has been developed, the learning points that Participants can identify from it, the critical links they have made and can make between practice and theory and the ways forward that they can identify for themselves and their work. This formative assessment will be translated into more formal summative assessment within the final Portfolio and will be examined in the final interview.

3.2.4 The Portfolio and the nature of evidence

This pilot system will be particularly relevant to those from excluded communities who, as yet, may have underdeveloped academic skills. The main evidence will take the form of a portfolio of work, which may contain elements of conventional written work, scrapbooks, taped evidence, videos, reflective diaries / blogs. The Scheme is meant to have a collective dimension, therefore the views and experiences of peers and members of relevant participating communities will be also taken into account.

This collective involvement has the following advantages:

- It directly involves people with whom the Participant works, thus incorporating an important measure of triangulation where real life ability to communicate and work with others can be checked against recorded competencies and reflective insights of the Participant
- It can also be empowering for peers and the community as it highlights key issues about Community Development practice for communities and workers alike
- In a collective activity like Community Development Work, talking to both the Participant's peers and the community provides a wider insight into the work that the Participant has carried out, from the professional and personal views of the those key people interviewed (it is not just on the say so of the Participant)
- All this will be supplemented by the observation of Participants' work practice and a final assessment interview based on the submitted Portfolio. An underpinning requirement will be that Participants are able to reflect upon their own practice. (see assessment at different levels below).

3.2.5 Quality and Quantity in assessment

An element of functional analysis will be a necessary part of the assessment strategy, particularly in assessing the documentation and mapping of Participants' skills to the identified roles and skills in the National Occupational Standards. However the assessment strategy needs to ensure this does not become an over-bureaucratic, unduly time-consuming Scheme for Participants, mentors and assessors alike.

Because of the Scheme's commitment to an empowering assessment process, the assessment strategy will focus on the qualitative approach i.e. rigour, quality and critical analysis and a balance of the more quantitative approach i.e. evidence gathered in the Portfolio and interviews.

3.2.6 Equivalence and Progression

The assessment strategy will ensure that Participants achieve a level of competence, knowledge and critical understanding that is equivalent to existing awards in Community Development Work and an

appropriate baseline for following existing progression routes to Community Development and other qualifications in the National Qualification Framework.

3.2.7 Assessment at different levels: ensuring reflection and reflexivity

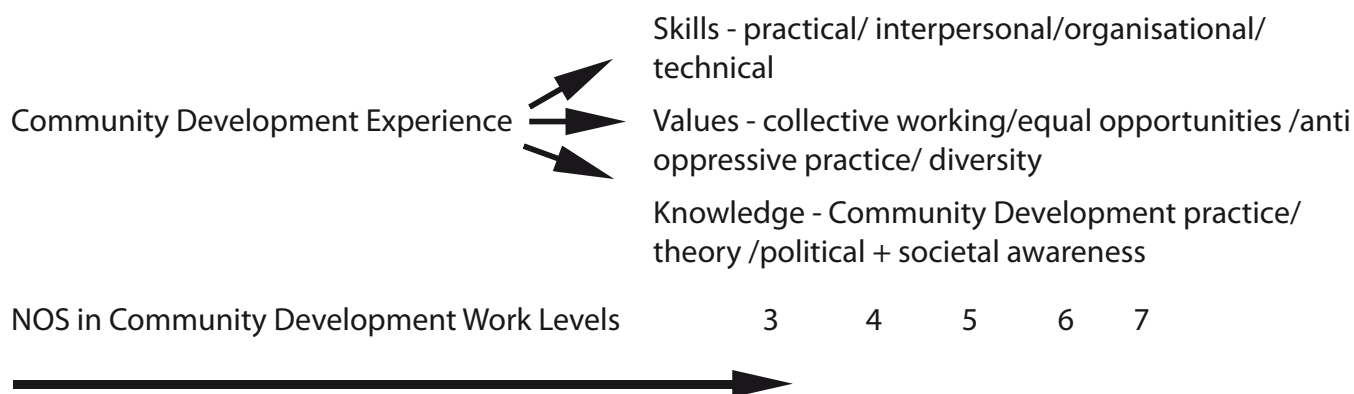
The assessment strategy will cover assessment at levels 3-7. It will follow established ESB guidelines on assessment ¹. An appropriate coverage of key skills at all levels will be expected and tested: (communication, application of number, information technology, working with others, improving own learning performance, problem solving). Criteria will vary according to level. Thus, for example:

- For level 3 assessment, the main emphasis will be on identifying and assessing skills and links to NOS, assessing relationships with participating communities and the development of reflective practice. At this level 'theory' will be seen to be embodied primarily in the National Occupational Standards. Also, there will be an emphasis on the verification of skills and critical practice and a more intensive approach to reflective practice. Here 'theory' will embody the National Occupational Standards and relevant selective Community Development literature.
- For levels 4 and 5, in addition to the above, a greater emphasis on the identification of transferable skills in line with NOS and the 6 six key skills identified for Foundation Degrees. In addition, a stronger focus on Participants' critical praxis and how this engages with the NOS values, practice principles, reflective practice, roles and skills. Here theory will embody a wider range of critical literature with level 5 involving further knowledge and understanding of international literature. At both levels a critical understanding of the relevance of particular theoretical models will be required.
- For level 6 and 7, a stronger focus on critical analysis and reflexivity (a critical self assessment of the Participant's prior values, practice principles and work history and their future development in relation to NOS). This will include a wider engagement with critical literature as evidenced in a sustained research-based study linking theory to practice at a level equivalent to that of a full degree.

3.2.8 What to Assess

- The Participant's range of experience, what s/he has learned from it and how s/he will develop it
- The relationship between the Participant and group/s worked with
- Practical skills in relation to NOS
- Transferable skills in relation to NOS and, where appropriate, key Higher Education-related skills
- Knowledge and understanding of Community Development theory/key principles related to NOS,
- Knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities/anti-oppressive practice
- Ability to relate practice to theory in a critical, reflective way
- Wider societal awareness and understanding.

Possible simplification of the above (or way of presenting to Participants):



¹ Briefing paper 1 on ESB guidance on its requirements in respect of practice and its assessment

3.2.9. Assessment approach and methods

1a. The Participant's range of prior experience will be 'mapped' and assessed through an initial self-assessment against the National Occupational Standards roles and skills. This will be discussed at the initial interview and Participants will be able to obtain guidance on this from written guidelines and supported by an identified IAG Adviser.

1b. Key learning points from the Participant's experience (and from any formal and informal training scheme) and how s/he will develop it further at a formative stage with the identified mentor will be assessed at a formal summative level through the Participant's Portfolio and at a final assessment interview. Different level criteria will apply (see below).

3.2.10 The relationship between the Participant and the groups worked with will be assessed through examples/case studies/reflections drawn from the Participant's work and identified in the Participant's Portfolio, through observation of the Participant's practice and by witness statements and/or group discussions with groups the Participant has worked with.

3.2.11 Practical skills in relation to core aspects of NOS will be assessed through selective mapping and documentation in the Participant's Portfolio. More in-depth verification of specific practical skills will be assessed by observation of practice and at a final summative assessment interview. Different level criteria will apply (see below).

3.2.12 Transferable skills that are relevant can be used in relation to the NOS and key skills for Foundation Degrees and will be assessed through selective mapping and documentation in the Participant's Portfolio and at a final summative assessment interview. (Different level criteria will apply).

3.2.13 Knowledge and understanding of Community Development theory /key principles related to NOS will be assessed in the final Portfolio, which will include sustained evidence of critical reflection on the links between the Participant's practice and the values, principles and reflective practice approach of the National Occupational Standards. This evidence can be provided in a variety of written (e.g. a reflective diary) or other forms (e.g. a blog). It can be tested out both in observed practice and at the final interview. (Different level criteria will apply).

3.2.14 Knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities and anti-oppressive practice will be assessed in the final Portfolio at all levels. Evidence will be required about the Participant's past practice in working with diverse groups, about what s/he has learned from this, her/his knowledge of equal opportunities policies and issues and how s/he might develop anti-oppressive practice in the future. This can be tested out, where appropriate, through witness statements or contributions from involved community groups, observed practice and at the final interview. (Different level criteria will apply).

3.2.15 Ability to relate practice to theory in a critical, reflective way will be developed in a formative way as part of the pilot Scheme. It will be formally assessed in the final Portfolio which will include sustained evidence of critical reflection on the links between the Participant's practice and relevant aspects of theory, whether derived from the National Occupational Standards or from wider Community Development or related literature. This can be tested out, where appropriate, in the Participant's observed practice and at the final assessment interview, where it will be a central feature. (Different level criteria will apply).

3.2.16 Wider societal awareness and understanding will be assessed at final interview. Different level criteria will apply. At level 3, some informed societal understanding will be progressively expected. At levels 4 - 7, a more extensive and critical awareness will be required, including some implications for Community Development Work policy and practice.

3.2.17 Portfolio

The Portfolio of evidence should include:

- The mapping of experience; examples, case studies, reflections from the Participant's work, systematic reflections on the inter-relationship between the Participant's work and National Occupational Standards, engagement with wider theory (dependent on level)
- Peer and community witness statements [up to 3 - depending on level]
- Observations of work practice – a report (by the mentor) a mixture of both interpersonal and organisational work [up to 2 - depending on level] These must be activities already in place as part of existing work [not set up merely for observation purposes] The mentor would ask the Participant to organise a visit to attend a specific group or piece of work for observation purposes. Permission will need to be given by the relevant people being observed.

The Participant will be shown all observation reports as an opportunity for learning and be able to comment on the report and to answer any questions posed by the mentor (and later the assessment panel) to indicate analysis has taken place. A format for recording observations will be needed. The report will take account of the possible impact of 'pressure' when a third person is present.

3.2.18 Formative and summative assessment and the role of the mentor

Formative development and assessment is central to the empowering and developmental nature of this pilot Scheme. It will clearly need the active involvement of a mentor who will have a central role in helping the Participant document their experience, reflect on their practice and develop their final Portfolio. The mentor may adopt the roles of supporter, guide, advocate, prompter, preparer, provider of some informal interim assessment in the formative assessment.

Where the Participant may have a gap in their learning or not have all the evidence needed, the mentor would suggest what the Participant needs to do to complete e.g. suggest an 'extra' piece of work to fulfil the criteria before the Portfolio is sent to Panel.

3.2.19 The final assessment panel will consist of 3 experienced and well-qualified practitioners (to include the mentor) with a range of Community Development Work experience.

The assessment panel will:

- Review the final Portfolio and all evidence presented
- Decide which questions to ask the Participant
- Decide which of the key people (peers & community) the Panel would like to interview and agree the questions relating to work with them, to confirm evidence within the Portfolio prior to the summative assessment interview
- Decide which assessor (not the mentor) will write the final assessment report
- Decide which assessor (not the mentor) will present the report to the assessment centre.

The Panel interview will allow the Participant to talk through the evidence with Panel members, to answer any questions they may have and any other issues arising from the whole assessment process.

If successful, the Participant will be recommended for an Award according to the level of their achievement. They will also receive a copy of the final assessment report by the panel.

If unsuccessful, the Panel will advise the Participant of their findings and how they reached their decision not to grant the Award. They will make possible recommendations with regard to future learning needs.

An appeals procedure will be available at all stages of the Scheme with full information given in the Information Pack. A panel of assessors external to the convened assessment panel will be called upon to oversee appeals.

Section 4 - Sample job descriptions

4.1 Job description - Information Advice and Guidance worker²

The role of the IAG worker is to provide information, advice and guidance to applicants interested in using this route to gain accreditation. They will do so by interviewing on a one-to-one basis experienced Community Development Workers in order to assess their readiness for the programme or range of programmes being offered by the Scheme. They will need to have a working knowledge of community development and the NOS, the accreditation scheme and the NOS assessment strategy. They should also know about local accreditation alternatives and how Applicants can access information about other options to accreditation – so that they may make an informed choice about the programme.

Specifications

1. To conduct initial interview with potential applicants and to offer information and guidance about the Scheme
2. To establish readiness for the Scheme which will take account of applicant's options, support, time available and range and depth of experience against the assessment criteria
3. To provide information and guidance on next steps to accreditation
4. To provide information and guidance on progression after course completion
5. To signpost to other routes where appropriate
6. To alert the potential Applicants to support which may assist their ability to complete the programme – e.g. language support, support for dyslexic applicants, British Sign Language (BSL)
7. To determine readiness to proceed on this route to accreditation
8. Attendance at the training provided by the Scheme prior to being contracted for this work
9. Adherence to the organisation's confidentiality code
10. Attendance at support/review group meetings and contributions to discussions on continuous Scheme improvement.

Minimum requirements:

Experience

As this role is key to the Scheme individuals should hold the qualifications necessary to deliver, assess and quality assure work based learning (WBL). Please note that in the National Occupational Standards assessment strategy there is a minimum requirement about the experience and qualifications for assessors and verifiers and we have adapted this requirement for associated staff on Schemes being submitted. This requirement is that mentors, IAG adviser and assessors should have at least two years Community Development Work experience (full time equivalent) paid or unpaid or be a recognised trainer of Community Development Workers or hold a community development work, youth and community work, play work, or social work qualification at Higher Education Diploma level or above.

Workers must have a clear understanding of the values and practice principles of community development work and experience of working with others around issues of personal development, and an understanding of the role of reflection and analysis in learning.

We also require a high level of listening and guidance skills and a working understanding of social exclusion and inequality and a commitment to social justice demonstrated in the community development context.

Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice

The IAG worker is required to demonstrate positive steps in the implementation of equal opportunities in all aspects of their role.

² It is essential that written contracts are drawn up between the management group and its IAG Adviser, mentors and coordinators to ensure that job requirements are met and the learner is not disadvantaged.

Additional issues to address

Who will the IAG worker report to?

Number of hours in the contract

How much will they be paid?

What are the termination specifications? (How much notice is required from the Scheme and the worker?)

What happens if there is a disagreement between the IAG worker and the potential applicant about their readiness to proceed onto the Scheme?

4.2 Job description – Mentors

The role of the mentor is to support the learning of the Scheme Participant once they have been accepted onto the Scheme. They help Participants to reflect on their practice, make links between community development practice, community development theories and the Scheme's assessment requirements. They therefore must have thorough knowledge of the Scheme's assessment strategy, Community Development Work NOS, and key theories which impact on community development. In addition they should have some knowledge about the ways in which the Participant can supplement their theoretical understanding by signposting them to other direct or indirect sources of this learning.

Specification

1. To meet regularly with assigned Participant(s) and agree arrangements for contact and meetings
2. Prepare for meetings
3. To set out the terms and conditions of the relationship
4. To support and guide the Participant through the compilation of their Portfolio
5. To offer the Participant opportunities for reflection on Community Development Work practice
6. To assist the Participant to make links between existing community development practice, community development theory and the Scheme's assessment requirements
7. To signpost the Participant to support which may assist their ability to complete the programme e.g. language support, support for dyslexic Participants, BSL
8. To meet with other mentors to provide ongoing reviews and to contribute to the evaluation of the Scheme
9. To work with Participants in preparation for their interview with the assessor panel who will discuss with them the contents of their Portfolio of evidence
10. Attendance at the training provided by the Scheme prior to being contracted for this work
11. Work with the Participant to develop a time table of work for the completion of the Portfolio.
12. Plan time to support the completion and submission of the Participant's Portfolio
13. Take notes of the tutorials, copies of which will be made available to the Participant
14. Discuss venues for the interview with assessors which will take account of Participant's needs such as disability, accessibility by public transport
15. Help with identifying areas of strength and learning which will be supplied to both Participant and assessors
16. Adherence to the organisation's confidentiality code.

Minimum requirements

As this role is key to the Scheme individuals should hold the qualifications necessary to deliver, assess and quality assure work based learning (WBL). Please note that in the National Occupational Standards assessment strategy there is a minimum requirement about the experience and qualifications for assessors and verifiers and we have adapted this requirement for associated staff on Schemes being submitted. This requirement is that mentors, IAG Adviser and assessors should have at least two years community development work experience (full time equivalent) paid or unpaid or be a recognised trainer of Community Development Workers or hold a community work, youth and community work, play work, or social work qualification at Higher Education diploma level or above. They must have a clear understanding of the values, practice principles of Community Development Work.

Workers must have a clear understanding of the values, practice principles of Community Development Work and experience of working with others around issues of personal development and an understanding of the role of reflection and analysis in learning.

We also require a high level of listening skills and a working understanding of social exclusion and inequality and a commitment to social justice demonstrated in the community development context.

Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice.

The mentor is required to demonstrate positive steps in the implementation of equal opportunities in all aspects of their role.

Additional issues to address:

Who will the mentor report to?

Number of hours in the contract

How much will they be paid?

What are the termination specifications? (How much notice is required from the Scheme and the worker?)

What happens if there is a disagreement between the mentor and the Participant about their readiness to submit their Portfolio?

4.3 Job descriptions for Assessors

To assess the evidence submitted by Participants for their accreditation, and to provide recommendations.

Specification

1. To receive and read completed Portfolios
2. To meet with other assessors to discuss and moderate Portfolios and to :-
 - a. Note any issues raised
 - b. Select the contacts to be visited e.g. community groups, colleagues
 - c. Devise the questions for the Participant interviews and
 - d. To prepare for the Participant interview
3. Set a timescale for the completion of any remaining work for assessment and ensure that the co-ordinator is notified
4. To meet with Participant's contacts (including community groups) to verify evidence submitted in Portfolio format
5. To receive information from the mentor which identifies areas of strength and learning, which will also have been supplied to the Participant
6. To interview the Participant as part of the Panel of assessors
7. To produce a Report with recommendations about the status of the submitted Portfolio and interview detailing whether the Participant should be put forward for accreditation
8. Adherence to the organisation's confidentiality code
9. Attendance at support/review group meetings and contributions to discussions on continuous Scheme improvement.

Minimum requirements

As this role is key to the Scheme individuals should hold the qualifications necessary to deliver, assess and quality assure WBL. Please note that in the National Occupational Standards assessment strategy there is a minimum requirement about the experience and qualifications for assessors and verifiers and we have adapted this requirement for associated staff on Schemes being submitted. This requirement is that mentors, IAG Adviser and assessors should have at least two years Community Development Work experience (full time equivalent) paid or unpaid or be a recognised trainer of Community Development Workers or hold a community development work, youth and community work, play work, or social work

qualification at Higher Education diploma level or above. They must have a clear understanding of the values, practice principles of Community Development Work.

Workers must have a clear understanding of the values, practice principles and of Community Development Work and experience of working with others around issues of personal development and an understanding of the role of reflection and analysis in the learning Scheme.

We also require a high level of assessment skills and a working understanding of social exclusion and inequality and a commitment to social justice demonstrated in the community development context.

Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice

The assessor is required to demonstrate positive steps in the implementation of equal opportunities in all aspects of their role.

Additional issues to address:

Who will the assessor report to?

Number of hours in the contract

How much will they be paid?

What are the termination specifications? (How much notice is required from the Scheme and the worker?)

What happens if there is a disagreement between the Participant and the assessor about the recommendations that result from this Scheme?

4.4 Job description Scheme Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator's role is to ensure the smooth operation of the Scheme and will work with the group that has overall responsibility for the management of the Scheme to:

1. Support the development and delivery of the Scheme
2. Report to the Scheme Management Group
3. Develop Scheme materials including the marketing materials that will alert potential Participants and employers about the Scheme's existence and its nature
4. Send Information Packs (which will be made available in large font, a number of different languages in Braille and on tape/CD) out to interested parties. It will include the Accreditation Scheme aims, how it will work, costs and registration details
5. Develop the application form that will be provided to potential Participants which will highlight their skills knowledge experience etc which will then be forwarded to the IAG worker
6. Organise informal sessions to allow potential and on-going Participants to build support, share knowledge and clarify points of interest
7. Provide information about the mentors available to support Participants through the Accreditation Scheme
8. Development of Participant registration documents – which will include section on funder arrangements
9. Invoice the funder
10. Develop an Employer Pack which will amongst other things highlight benefits to the organisation in accreditation and encouraging employer support for the Scheme and details of how time off from work, flexibility can aid the completion of the programme
11. Find ways to incorporate the voice of local communities into the Scheme
12. Oversee the Scheme in terms of its anti-discriminatory and anti oppressive practice

13. Organise training for the IAG worker, the assessors, mentors, moderators, managers
14. Organise the evaluation of the Scheme
15. Adherence to the organisation's confidentiality code
16. Work with the Management Board to develop guidelines and checklists for mentoring, IAG and assessor good practice.

Additional issues to address

Number of hours in the contract

How much will they be paid?

What are the termination specifications? (How much notice is required from the Scheme and the worker?)

Section 5 - Sample application forms

Application form for work as a mentor with _____

1. Name and contact details
2. Work address if applicable
3. Current position
4. Details of any education and training relevant to the mentor role
5. Please provide information on your Community Development Work experience, especially in relation to anti-oppressive practice in the last 5 years
6. Experience of mentoring, and or supervision (within the work place or as training supervisor)
7. As a worker how do you help others to reflect on their own learning?
8. What is your understanding of equalities work in relation to community development work?
9. Your experience of the training and assessment of community development work
10. Please state briefly why you would like to become a mentor and provide any further supporting information, including your strengths and interests

Section 6 - The content of training programmes

The aim of the programme is to build up a competent confident 'bank' of workers who can contribute to the key areas of the programme. They will therefore be able to make links between their work and the assessment requirements.

Assessment centres will decide on whether to train groups together or separately and to establish training/induction for members of the Management Board.

Areas which will need to be covered in the programme may include:

- The overall structure of the programme
- Creating a learning environment in an informal setting
- The assessment criteria
- The relationship between Community Development Work practice, NOS and the assessment criteria
- Identifying Levels and starting point
- Portfolio building and what counts as evidence – what constitutes a threshold for a good and excellent Portfolio
- Portfolio content, format and length
- Preparing for the interview Scheme (IAG, mentor and assessor)
- Conducting the interview (IAG, mentor and assessor)
- Anti-discriminatory practice and how it would be represented in assessment terms
- Positive action strategies
- Core competencies of a Community Development Worker
- Moderation and appeal Schemes
- The roles and responsibilities of IAG adviser, assessors and mentors
- Relationships and boundaries between IAG adviser, assessors and mentors
- How all of the above work with the Scheme coordinator
- Signposting and resource issues
- Assessing and moderating a Portfolio
- Visits to contacts
- Practising presenting a Portfolio to an assessment panel
- Writing a final report
- The organisation's confidentiality code
- The monitoring and evaluation Scheme.



Supporting Communities
Creating Change

www.EnglandStandardsBoard.org.uk

esb@fcdl.org.uk