

# Lead Adult Care Worker v2.0

☆ Level 3    £ TBC    📅 18 months

## 1. What the role entails

Lead adult care workers provide high-quality, person-centred care and support to adults with a range of needs, helping them to live as independently as possible. They combine hands-on care with leadership responsibilities, acting as role models for colleagues, supervising junior staff, and promoting safe, effective, and compassionate care practices. Working with individuals, families, healthcare professionals, and wider support teams, they ensure care plans are followed, health and safety standards are maintained, and the physical and emotional wellbeing of those they support is prioritised.

## 2. On-programme

An apprentice will typically spend 18 months on-programme (this means in training before the gateway to completion) working towards occupational competence. They **must** spend a minimum of 8 months on-programme and complete the minimum required off-the-job training time, in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

The apprentice must receive training to develop the occupational standard's knowledge and skills (K&S) criteria and achieve

English and maths in line with the DfE apprenticeship funding rules, if required.

While on-programme, apprentices **must** undertake both assessment methods; these can take place in any order. They cannot be taken before month 6 of the apprenticeship. Apprentices must also complete the mandatory qualification Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care approved by Skills for Care 1st April 2026.

## 3. Gateway to completion requirements

Gateway to completion should be used as the final opportunity to check an apprentice has met all the requirements for completion. An apprentice can only be put forward for gateway to completion when the apprentice and their employer (in consultation with the centre) are content they have attained the sufficient knowledge, skills and behaviours to successfully complete the apprenticeship and the apprentice has achieved their apprenticeship assessments and mandatory qualification.

For the Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker, the requirements are:

- the off-the-job requirements have been met, as per the funding rules

- English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules
- Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care approved by Skills for Care 1st April 2026
- confirmation from the employer that the apprentice has met the behaviour requirements as set out in the apprenticeship assessment plan
- successful completion of both apprenticeship assessment methods.

#### 4. Apprenticeship assessment

The apprenticeship assessment for Lead Adult Care Worker contains two methods of assessment. A Professional Discussion that **must** be NCFE assessed and a Portfolio, which can be assessed using one of two models offered by NCFE.

|                      |                                                                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>NCFE combined</b> | Delivered and assessed by centre assessors, subject to IQA and NCFE EQA. |
| <b>NCFE assessed</b> | Delivered and assessed directly by NCFE assessors.                       |

#### Assessment 1: Professional Discussion

The Professional Discussion provides the apprentice with the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the assessment criteria associated with this assessment method through a structured, recorded, two-way discussion with an assessor.

The Professional Discussion will be conducted in a way that enables the apprentice to provide examples to show how they

have demonstrated the assessment criteria and to achieve the highest grade available. The Professional Discussion may last for up to 1 hour and 15 minutes.

The Professional Discussion is graded fail, pass or distinction.

#### Assessment 2: Portfolio

The Portfolio provides the apprentice with the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the assessment criteria associated with this assessment method through a collection of evidence generated throughout the apprenticeship.

The Portfolio is compiled throughout the apprenticeship and submitted once the apprentice, employer and centre agree that it is complete and the apprentice is ready to undertake the assessment process. The Portfolio must contain no more than 25 discrete pieces of evidence and must **not** be submitted before the 6-month point.

The Portfolio is graded as fail, pass or distinction.

The Portfolio can be delivered through either an NCFE-combined model or an NCFE-assessed model. In the NCFE-combined model, a centre assessor delivers and grades the assessment, with outcomes subject to Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and NCFE External Quality Assurance (EQA). In the NCFE-assessed model, assessments are delivered and graded directly by NCFE assessors. Both options are supported by robust quality assurance processes to ensure valid, reliable and consistent assessment outcomes.

## 5. Grade aggregation information

| Professional Discussion | Portfolio   | Final grade |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Pass                    | Pass        | Pass        |
| Distinction             | Pass        | Pass        |
| Pass                    | Distinction | Pass        |
| Distinction             | Distinction | Distinction |

A fail in any assessment method will result in a fail overall.

## 6. Completion and certification

Once NCFE verifies the apprentice has successfully completed all apprenticeship assessment methods and gateway to completion requirements, they will activate certification. Working with the apprenticeship certificate issuing authority, NCFE will ensure the apprentice receives their certificate.

## 7. What next?

Successful completion of the Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker apprenticeship can open up a range of career development opportunities within the adult care sector. Apprentices may progress into more senior supervisory and management roles, taking increased responsibility for leading teams, coordinating care provision, and supporting service improvement. The qualification also provides a strong foundation for further professional development through higher-level apprenticeships and specialist pathways within health and social care.

Possible apprenticeships a lead adult care worker could progress to include Level 4 Lead Practitioner in Adult Care and Level 5 Leader in Adult Care.

### Why NCFE?

We are an approved Assessment Organisation (AO) specialising in apprenticeship assessment across health, education, social care, business, active leisure and digital apprenticeship standards. NCFE offers flexible and reliable apprenticeship assessment solutions supported by sector expertise, guidance documents and proactive service and support.