

Student Handbook

The qualification you are studying is:

Your Assessor is:

Your programme of study is due to complete on:

Contact details

Name	Job Role	Contact
	Vocational Assessor	
	Second Assessor (if applicable)	
	Internal Quality Assurer	
John Buttle	Centre Manager	john@socialworksltd.co.uk

CONTENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. About RQF qualifications 2. Roles and responsibilities 3. Attendance and punctuality 4. Deadlines and extensions 5. Guidance for submitting work 6. Marking of assignments 7. Moderation 8. Reasonable adjustment and special consideration 9. Special needs 10. Continuous professional development (CPD) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Safe keeping of portfolios & workbooks 12. Plagiarism and ‘cheating’ 13. Unique Learner Number (ULN) 14. Appeals procedure 15. Complaints 16. Health and safety 17. Equality and diversity 18. Health and wellbeing 19. Safeguarding |
|--|--|

We really hope that you have the best possible journey through your studies with us.

Whatever you’re studying, we know it can feel a bit daunting at the start. Don’t worry, you’re not alone. All of us at Social Works are here to help. This handbook has lots of information in it to point you in the right direction.

If you have any questions about anything to do with your studies, just ask – questions are what learning is all about!

1. About RQF qualifications

RQF stands for Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is the new name and structure for what used to be known as NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications).

RQF qualifications are divided into 'units' that make up the qualification's learning goals. Each unit will have a title, a unit code and a learning 'credit' value.

For example

Unit code:	F/602/0097
Unit title:	'Understand Mental well-being and mental health promotion'
Credits:	3

For any qualification you do under the RQF, a minimum credit value will be assigned to demonstrate successful achievement of that qualification.

Qualifications under the RQF are divided into Awards, Certificates and Diplomas, depending upon how many credits you have achieved.

Credits can be transferred from one course to another (however there are rules about how they are combined etc).

If you would like to know more about 'units', 'credits' or how they combine, just ask your assessor or any one at Social Works Ltd.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The role of the assessor/tutor

The assessor/tutor is the person who will work with you to teach and guide you through your studies, they:

- Give you advice, information and guidance on your learning choices.
- Providing candidate induction and initial assessment to ensure you are aware of your own responsibility in the process.
- Identification of prior achievement that is relevant to the units/elements being claimed, and sources of evidence that achievement
- Ensuring you are aware of the centre appeals procedure.
- Plan your studies with you and identify any special support you might need.

- help you understand what is meant by the RQF's qualification standards in relation to your studies and work
- Identify where the evidence to meet your qualification's standards can be found.
- Undertake classroom teaching, tutorials, observations and discussions with you.
- Review the evidence collected by you as evidence against meeting national qualification standards.
- Provide positive feedback and support to you, including giving feedback in any area where improvements in performance are expected or desired.
- Advise you in how to develop your portfolio of evidence.
- Work in a non-discriminatory, respectful and supportive way.
- Develop their own knowledge and assessment skills to maintain consistency in their work.

Assessors are expected to:

- Have regular contact with their learner(s).
- Attend assessor and standardisation meetings with other assessors - at least 3 times a year.
- Ensure learners keep records of assessment plans, reviews, feedback and advice.
- When necessary, meet with the internal/external verifier (see below for what they are and what they do).

The role of the learner

Your assessor will provide support, give advice and guide you through the RQF process.

Whether you are attending classroom sessions or meeting with your assessor on a one to one basis, please ensure you:

- make the most of this time
- clearly understand the work set
- have clear expectations of what is to be achieved before your next session
- recognise that you, not your assessor, are responsible for providing the evidence you need to show achievement towards your qualification

Please remember your assessor is there to guide you, so if in doubt, just ask.

To achieve your qualification you must complete ALL elements of each RQF unit set. This includes 'knowledge' (written or discussed evidence) as well as any 'observed' criteria (where your assessor must see you in a real work environment).

You, the learner are expected to:

- Agree assessment plans with your assessor and identify where evidence can be found.
- Keep evidence and arrange it into a portfolio acceptable to the awarding organisation.
- Provide evidence of prior achievement that is relevant to the credit/units being claimed, and sources of evidence of that achievement
- Agree assessment plans with your assessor and identify where evidence can be found.
- Keep evidence and arrange it into a portfolio acceptable to the awarding organisation.
- Give your evidence to the assessor for marking and undertake any further work required at agreed times.

Where your course requires, your assessor will observe you working to meet the standards specified for each of your qualification units. You will need to explain how you work to that standard. This is known as a 'reflective account' or 'learner explanation'.

The role of the internal quality assurance manager

The internal quality assurance manager coordinates all Social Works Ltd's internal quality assurers. They will also undertake their own quality assurance assessments of learners' work, as well as:

- Ensure that the RQF statement of purpose is adhered to at all times by all people involved with the RQF.
- Monitor all RQF activity within Social Works Limited.
- Quality assures the assessment procedures within Social Works Limited on a daily basis, and ensures that assessor meetings, internal quality assurance meetings and standardisation meetings are taking place.
- Keep in regular contact with awarding bodies' external verifiers and meets twice yearly with each awarding body's external verifiers to review and monitor the centre's practices.
- Register and certificate learners for their Diploma.
- Keep up to date with the awarding organisation's policies and procedures and incorporates these in to those of Social Works Limited.
- Support and encourage all assessors and internal quality assurers (IVs) with the RQF process.
- Is the Centre's primary agent for ensuring the assessment process and its outcomes are

- Demonstrate that your learning outcomes are achieved.
- Meet with the quality assurance co-ordinator (IV) and external verifier if and when the need should arise.
- Provide evidence of achievement to the quality assurance co-ordinator /external verifier on request.
- Have the responsibility to inform the assessor if you are unable to keep an appointment and to re-book as soon as possible
- Work in a non-discriminatory and respectful way with your assessor and fellow learners.

valid, reliable and meet the requirements of awarding bodies.

- Ensure equal opportunities and non-discriminatory principles are upheld.

The role of the internal quality assurer:

Internal quality assurers (often referred to as IVs or internal verifiers):

- Oversee the assessment process and outcomes, ensuring that the correct records are kept.
- Are accountable for ensuring that quality and consistency of the assessment process as applied.
- Ensure that assessors apply the process of assessment in a standardised manner.
- Ensure assessment judgements are applied consistently.
- Ensure assessments are checked through interim and summative sampling both through the work of each assessor and the evidence being presented by the learner.
- Ensure records of learner achievement are kept accurately and are regularly updated.
- Train, coach, advise and support assessors and learners.
- Ensure equal opportunities and non-discriminatory principles are upheld.
- provide regular up-dates and reviews of assessment practice by means of:
 - ✓ assessor support meetings
 - ✓ written updates
 - ✓ individual meetings with assessors
 - ✓ visits to the service to meet learners and supervisors

The role of the external quality assurer (often called external verifier or EV) (employed by the awarding body)

The external quality assurer (EV):

- Ensures that decisions on competence are consistent across centres.
- Ensures that the quality of assessment and verification meets National Standards.
- Samples learner assessments, monitors assessments and verification procedures in centres.
- Makes regular visits to centres and assessment locations.
- Ensures that their own verification practice meets the agreed National Standards.

An EV works for the awarding body accrediting qualifications and is independent of Social Works.

3. Attendance and punctuality

We expect our staff and learners to have a positive attitude to their learning and to encourage each other towards achieving the best possible results. Working in fellowship with your colleagues is part of your professional value base.

As part of this commitment we expect 100% attendance and punctuality at all sessions from both learners and assessors.

Records of attendance will be maintained by your assessor. An unsatisfactory level of attendance and punctuality may lead to an intervention and possibly being withdrawn from the programme.

If you have a valid reason for being absent please email, text or call your assessor as soon as possible in advance of your planned session and if applicable please ensure your line manager is also aware.

Failure to notify us in advance will mean that your absence is recorded as unauthorised on the register.

4. Deadlines and extensions

Assignments must be submitted by the deadline date for submission. If you are unable to submit coursework by the deadline date, through illness or other unforeseen circumstance, then please speak to your assessor as soon as possible. Failure to submit work on time may lead to you falling behind in your learning programme, and could affect your ability to complete.

5. Guidance for submitting work

Please make sure that you put your name, together with the unit number, title of unit, qualification level

and the date completed at the top of all submitted work.

For example:

Collette Busby
 SHC 31: Promote communication in health, social care or children's and young people's settings
 Level 3
 04/03/13

We recommend you back up your work electronically (on a memory stick for example), or take a photocopy if you are handwriting your work.

6. Marking of assignments

Assignments will be formally marked after the deadline date as a 'pass' or 'refer'. If you are given a 'refer' on a piece of work, your assessor will discuss this with you. This piece of work should be submitted as a new piece with your next set of assignments.

Feedback will be provided verbally and in writing by your assessor.

7. Moderation

All assignments are subject to a process of internal quality assurance (internal verifying) and additional requirements may be set to achieve competence as a result of this process

A sample of assignments is also moderated by an external verifier where appropriate (this will usually be someone from the Awarding Body that accredits your qualification). Once again additional requirements may be set to achieve competence as a result of this process.

8. Reasonable adjustment and special consideration

Social Works Ltd aims to facilitate open access to all qualifications for Learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in assessments, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured.

This will be achieved through:

Reasonable Adjustment – This is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor you an assessment advantage over other Learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Special Consideration – This is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Any special consideration granted cannot remove the difficulty you faced at the time of assessment and can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure the integrity of the assessment is not compromised. Special consideration cannot apply to ‘license to practice’ units within a qualification, or to ‘license to practice’ qualifications.

A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the Learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments may involve:

- Changing usual assessment arrangements
- Adapting assessment materials
- Providing assistance during assessment
- Re-organising the assessment physical environment
- Changing or adapting the assessment method
- Using assistive technology.

Social Works Ltd understands that reasonable adjustments must be approved (internally or externally) and set in place prior to assessment commencing. It is an arrangement to give a Learner access to a qualification.

For more information on reasonable adjustments see your assessor. You can get a full copy of Social Works Limited’s *Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy* from anyone at Social Works Limited. or any Social Works staff.

9. Special needs

Social Works Ltd will ensure that every possible effort is made to support all learners on the programme, including those who may have additional or special need requirements.

Learners may word-process their work or record it on tape to be transcribed. Documents can be supplied in large print format.

Additional support and assessor time can be made available where needed.

The needs of the learner will be addressed on an individual basis in a positive way with due

consideration given to the possible sensitive nature of the issue.

Any learner who feels the need for special consideration should discuss this with their assessor or the quality assurance co-ordinator *at the earliest opportunity* so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

10. Safe keeping of portfolios & workbooks

Your portfolio/workbook is your responsibility and you should keep it safe and secure at ALL times. Your portfolio/workbook could be called for at any time by an internal quality assurer (IV) or external verifier (EV).

Your assessor will provide you with feedback and planning sheets, these should be kept safe in your portfolio/workbook. These are very important as the will give details of work you have completed and where you have shown competence.

11. Continuous professional development (CPD)

Continually developing your knowledge base is an essential way for you to keep your work knowledge up to date.

For some courses this is compulsorily (your assessor will be able to tell you). It is simple to keep a CPD record.

We strongly recommend that you keep a monthly record of your Continuing Professional Development (CPD), in a similar way to the example below:.

For example:

Week commencing	Activity	Hours	How this helps my CPD
28/05/17	Safeguarding of vulnerable adults workshop	3 hours	Keeping me informed on the latest good practice

12. Plagiarism and ‘cheating’

Plagiarism is the act of taking another person's writing, conversation, song, or even idea and passing it off as your own. This includes information from web pages, books, songs, television shows, email messages, interviews, articles, artworks or any other medium. It is commonly known as ‘cheating’ and will not be tolerated.

Whenever you paraphrase, summarise, or take words, phrases, or sentences from another person's work, it is necessary to indicate the source of the information. You can either do this by adding a reference list at the end of your assignments, or you can credit the quote within the document. Please ask your assessor if you would like further guidance on how to reference your sources. Work submitted that is found to be plagiarised will not be accepted and will need to be completed again. In some cases, repeated deliberate plagiarism or cheating may result in withdrawal from a course.

13. Data and Unique Learner Numbers

A Unique Learner Number (ULN) is a 10-digit number which is unique to each learner and is used in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. If you have a ULN already, enter this on your Social Works Course Registration form. If you do not already have a ULN, or do not know it, Social Works will check with the government's Learning Records Service and either find it for you or assign you one if you need it.

All learners on a course with Social Works need a ULN if their course is part of the Qualification and Credit Framework (RQF). Your ULN will be used by awarding organisations to populate a central personalised Learner Record of qualifications achieved by you within the RQF Framework. If you have any queries about the ULN, please ask your assessor/tutor.

The personal information you provide to us may be shared with other organisations (such as Skills for Care, Awarding Bodies etc) for education, training and employment related purposes, including for research. At no time will your personal information be passed to organisations external of Social Works Limited Ltd for sales purposes. All information will be processed and stored in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulations and all other relevant legislation. Social Works Ltd is registered with the Information Commissioners Office, under the reference number Z1298265

14. Appeals procedure

If you feel an assignment has been unjustly 'referred', please speak directly to the assessor who marked it in the first instance to express your concerns. Hopefully this discussion will resolve the

situation and make you clearer about the reasons this decision was made.

If you are still unhappy, you can appeal an academic decision. Appeals procedures are in place to allow learners to challenge the outcomes of any assessment if they consider that the assessment has not been carried out properly. Every attempt will be made to ensure that the procedures will adhere to the principles of natural justice, fairness, equity, independence, objectivity, equal opportunities, anti-racism and anti-discrimination and special needs.

Appeals are allowed on the following grounds:

- ✓ the conduct of the assessment.
- ✓ adequacy of the range, nature and comprehensiveness of the evidence.
- ✓ adequacy of the opportunities offered to demonstrate competence.

The outcomes of the appeal may be:

- confirmation of the original decision.
- instructions that the competence be re-assessed by the same or a different assessor.
- a judgement that the evidence presented is an adequate demonstration of competence and a recommendation that the assessment decision be reconsidered.

If learners consider that the appeal procedures have not been carried out properly they can complain firstly to the centre and, if still dissatisfied, directly to the awarding body.

Please ask your assessor or the Centre Manager for full information on our academic appeals process.

Complaints can be made to your assessor, internal quality assurance manager, centre manager for Social Works Ltd or direct to your qualification's awarding body.

15. Complaints

Customer feedback is important to Social Works Limited and we always welcome feedback whether positive or negative.

If you have any complaint about any aspect of your experience with Social Works Ltd, please raise this with your assessor, the internal quality assurance manager or centre manager for Social Works Ltd immediately so that we can investigate and resolve the issue. Our formal *Complaints Procedure* can be sourced from anyone in Social Works Ltd.

16. Health and safety

Social Works Limited accepts its legal duties and responsibilities with regard to the health, safety and welfare of its premises, activities, staff, students, visitors and others.

Along with the staff and associates of Social Works Limited, learners and visitors are expected to contribute to creating a healthy and safe environment that helps to ensure that all can become 'safe persons' and 'safe learners'.

Social Works Limited, its staff, contractors and directors are committed to implementing high standards of health and safety by:

- conducting assessment of risk, implementing control measures, recording significant findings and providing safe systems for controlling any associated risk
- ensuring appropriate procedures in the event of fire and other emergencies including injuries and dangerous occurrences- with effective recording and reporting to the relevant manager and appropriate bodies
- making sure articles and substances are used, handled, stored and transported using safe systems to prevent risks to health or safety;
- providing adequate resources to maintain a safe working environment with regard to facilities and welfare arrangements
- ensuring your learning environment will be free of intimidation, harassment, violence, or undue stress, wherever possible
- maintaining a systematic assessment of needs in providing and updating information, instruction, training, and supervision in hazard awareness and risk control. This should allow staff and learner to understand their personal responsibilities for their own safety and that of others, and in co-operating with the company in complying with statutory obligations
- ensuring that those responsible for managing, supervising or purchasing plant, equipment and personal protective equipment, assess the risks, maintain, repair, and ensure that such equipment is safe for use and fit for purpose;
- making sure that activities involving events, field trips and placements are assessed and are safe to undertake
- monitoring health and safety performance and ensuring regular reports are provided to the company directors,

Following this ethos, all learners are asked to adopt a questioning approach to safety and risk management, raising any queries with their assessor or other company representative at the earliest possible time.

You can get a full copy of Social Works Limited's *Health And Safety Policy* from anyone at Social Works Limited.

17. Equality, diversity & core British values

Social Works Limited is an equal opportunities employer and aspires to recognizing and respecting the diversity of all the people with whom it interacts. This means that it is the Company's policy that there should be no discrimination, harassment, less favourable treatment or victimization of any employee, associate, freelancer, job applicant, customer, learner, provider of services or member of the public either directly or indirectly on the grounds of:

- Race, nationality or ethnic origin;
- Gender, gender re-assignment, marital or family status;
- Disability;
- Trade union membership or activity;
- Sexual orientation;
- Age
- Religion or religious beliefs

It is also company policy that there should be no bullying and that all staff and learners respect the Core British Values of:

- Democracy,
- the rule of law,
- individual liberty,
- mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs

The Company is fully committed to providing a good and harmonious working environment that offers equal treatment and equal opportunities to all so that everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Whilst the Social Works Limited recognizes that the overall responsibility for this lies with the Company directors, every employee, associate, freelancer, job applicant, customer, learner, provider of services or member of the public, whatever their position within the Company, has some measure of responsibility for ensuring its effective implementation. In this respect everyone should ensure that:

- ✓ They cooperate with any measures introduced to develop equal opportunities;
- ✓ They refrain from taking discriminatory actions or decisions which are contrary to either the letter or spirit of this policy;
- ✓ They do not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees, job applicants, customers, providers of services or members of the public in a manner contrary to either the letter or the spirit of this policy;

- ✓ They do not instruct, induce or attempt to induce or pressurise other employees and associate freelance contractors to act in breach of this policy.

You can get a full copy of Social Works Limited's *Equalities And Diversity Policy* from anyone at Social Works Limited.

18. Health and wellbeing

Social Works Ltd strives to provide a healthy working environment where learners are able to operate and carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively thereby driving forward personal achievement and success. Social Works Ltd is committed to developing and maintaining a culture of respect and wellbeing resulting in students that are healthy, confident and emotionally resilient. Social Works Ltd's commitment is to provide:

- a supportive culture
- fairness and equality
- ownership and responsibility for ones' own health and well being
- effective communication and consultation procedure
- management of stress
- encouragement of a good work- life balance
- planning and evaluation of health and wellbeing activities
- recognition and valuing student achievement
- quality assurance and enhancement systems

A full copy of our *Health and Wellbeing policy* can be sourced from anyone in Social Works Ltd.

19. Safeguarding

Social Works Ltd believes that it is always unacceptable for a vulnerable adult, child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all vulnerable adults, children and young people, by a commitment to policies, procedures and practices which protects them.

Adult abuse can be:	Child abuse can be
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-neglect, • sexual, • psychological, • discriminatory, • organisational, • modern slavery, • domestic, • neglect. • financial, • physical, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical, • sexual, • neglect, • emotional, • child trafficking • radicalisation • female genital mutilation (FGM)
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Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone. Where appropriate Social Works Ltd's learners, Staff, Volunteers, Directors &/or Freelance Associates will be expected to undergo record checks through the government's Disclosure and Barring Service.

Staff, volunteers, learners, directors &/or freelance associates of Social Works Ltd have a duty to be conscious of the need to protect vulnerable adults, children and young people and to any identify suspected abuse and report it.

In the first instance, all concerns should be reported to **John Buttle**, Social Works Limited's Senior Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours of any disclosure, or witnessing of an incident that caused concern. Always question anything that you are uncomfortable with, including worries that someone is being radicalised.

The senior Safeguarding Officer will:

- record the concern and collate any available evidence
- initiate a timely initial investigation
- report concerns and action taken in a timely manner to appropriate authorities where this is considered necessary or a legal duty to report exists.

Once concerns are raised, the person raising those initial concerns may not be able to be kept fully informed of subsequent action due to the need to maintain confidentiality and the integrity of the investigative process.

Nothing in our policies should be seen to affect or influence any individual from making a direct referral of their concerns to an appropriate body. For more information ask any Social Works Ltd assessor or staff member for a full copy of our *Safeguarding Children Policy* and/or *Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy*.

Good Luck with your studies!