

## Scottish Care Response to Draft National Framework for Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development in Scotland 2025

### Q1: The Adult Support and Protection L&D Framework will support you in your day-to-day work

Disagree

**Explanation:** The framework provides a consistent national reference point for ASP learning expectations across roles and sectors. However, our view is that it is currently too high-level and broad to be fully practical in day-to-day work and huge variation in policy, practice, and training at both systemic and local level is not addressed in the current draft. This includes differences in culture, referral handling, thresholds, criteria, decision-making, and advice from agencies such as social work or the Care Inspectorate. Without addressing these differences, the framework's ability to support daily work is limited. Its practical value will depend on clear role guidance, accessible resources and alignment with related initiatives (e.g. the NES National Induction Framework).

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### Q2: Will your organisation use the Framework in practice?

Not sure

**Explanation:** The framework has the potential to add value in benchmarking current learning provision, identifying training gaps, and informing workforce development plans. However, its effectiveness will be impacted by the challenges of internal compliance and audit in the face of area-level variations in practice. The framework is non-statutory and flexible, placing the onus on organisations to determine workforce levels and training needs which risks creating more avenues for interpretation rather than consistency. Implementation challenges include a lack of clarity on where social care roles sit within the levels. Without more specific direction and guidance—particularly for the social care sector—staff may struggle to identify where they fit within the framework and interpret how the competencies translate into practice. We would seek to use the framework alongside sector-specific guidance and examples—similar to the “Tell Someone” training programme—to ensure consistent interpretation and application. However, without a statutory footing or comprehensive and consistent integration with existing adult support and protection education and practices, it risks being lost in what is an increasingly complex and cluttered landscape for social care providers and staff to navigate. For maximum uptake, it needs to address existing barriers to consistent ASP education and training such as variable awareness of resources and opportunities, resource and capacity constraints, training accessibility, perceived duplication of wider efforts with internal training, and lack of clarity on the

benefits of additional programmes and guidance —issues already seen in partnership areas.

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### **Q3: Three elements that most clarify the knowledge, understanding, and skills required by each level**

1. **Workforce Level Definitions** – The five-tier structure provides a starting point for identifying role-appropriate training.
2. **Core Competency Descriptions** – Clear articulation of knowledge, skills, and behaviours expected at each level.
3. **Connection to Legislation and Guidance** – Embedding statutory context strengthens understanding of safeguarding duties.

These elements are helpful, but their impact depends on the framework being inclusive of sector-specific realities, so staff can see exactly how competencies apply to their role. These elements help set clear learning expectations across sectors, though practical role examples would make them more actionable

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### **Q4: Three elements needing most improvement for clarity**

1. **Sector-Specific Role Examples** – Especially for social care, where staff often span multiple levels and responsibilities.
2. **Assessment & Evidence Guidance** – Practical methods for how competence will be demonstrated, maintained, and audited across different localities.
3. **Practical Application Scenarios** – Real-world examples showing how to navigate local thresholds, referral processes, and partnership working.

Those we engaged with around the Framework stressed that more specificity is needed to avoid misinterpretation and inconsistency. These improvements would help address current gaps in clarity and variation in local practice.

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### **Q5: Clarity on distinction between workforce groups**

**Rating:** Disagree.

**Explanation:** The tiered model is a generally familiar and useful framework, and the increase in responsibilities at each level is clearly set out. However, it is not sufficiently clear where roles in different sectors and services would align with the groups. Additionally, some social care roles—especially in smaller services—are hard to categorise, which risks uneven application. Leaving workforce level decisions entirely to

individual organisations may result in significant variations in practice. More guidance, case examples, and a standardised role mapping tool would help ensure targeted learning reaches the right staff. Clearer guidance, standardised role mapping tools, and case studies are needed to ensure correct allocation, particularly given local policy and practice differences. If strengthened, the framework could empower managers with defensible decision-making tools and evidence for role and process compliance.

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#### **Q6: Clarity on Core Competencies**

**Rating:** Agree, with amendments needed.

**Explanation:** The core competencies are well-structured and align with ASP principles, but could be strengthened by explicitly including professional curiosity, cultural competence, and trauma-informed practice. There is also a need to clarify how these competencies connect with existing frameworks like the National Induction Framework and other national resources to avoid duplication and maximise relevance.

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#### **Q7: Any other feedback**

The framework is a positive step towards consistent ASP learning across Scotland, but to achieve its aims it must:

- Provide clearer placement guidance for social care roles.
- Include sector-specific examples and scenarios to aid practical application.
- Offer standardised guidance for determining workforce levels to avoid inconsistency.
- Address known challenges in reporting and threshold decisions through clear, shared procedures.
- Ensure training is accessible to all sectors, especially where uptake is currently low.
- Be supported by resources, cross-agency coordination, and regular review to remain relevant.
- Balance flexibility with enough prescription to avoid creating more interpretation rather than consistency.

If implemented well, the framework could promote standardisation, support frontline staff in understanding their responsibilities, and empower managers with tools for defensible decision-making and process evidence.

The framework has potential but needs more clarity, specificity, and practical detail to translate well into day-to-day safeguarding practice.

August 2025.

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