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# Advantages

Some employers see why learning and development is important more than others, which is why you should always discuss this with your employer.

Advantages for you may include:

- improve the quality of your work
- gain new skills
- increase your knowledge
- improve your ability to carry out more specialised support
- increase your confidence
- give you a sense of achievement
- reduce risk in the workplace
- increase your job satisfaction
- able to pass on your knowledge or perhaps supervise others
- reduce conflict in the workplace
- better working relationship with your employer
- keep up to date with new laws and other ways of doing things
- feel your employer has invested in you.

For your employer, investing in learning and development will result in better support from a more confident and motivated worker. It shows you that your development is important to them, you may feel more valued as an employee and as a result you may be more likely to continue working for them. These points all contribute to a good working relationship.

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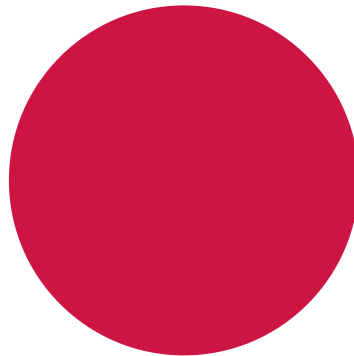
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This diagram shows how you (ideally with your employer) can think about your learning and development needs and plan how they should be met, before arranging learning or completing training. It also shows that this should be an on-going process.

Click on each of the circles to find out more information.



# 1. Identify your training needs

The best way to identify your training needs is to consider the following factors:

- Think about your existing experience, knowledge and skills.
- Talk about what you need to know and do. Have a look at your job description and see how this matches your employers needs and support plan.
- Your employer may require you to have awareness or training for specific conditions. They might call this "mandatory training" or "things you must know about".
- If your employer receives a personal health budget (PHB) there may be specific delegated health care tasks in their support/care plan that you need training to perform.
- Talk to your employer about any gaps in your understanding and how these might be filled.
- Think about your employer's situation and how that might change over time. There may be some learning that could be done now that will prepare both of you for the future.
- You might identify a training need in response to something that has happened at work. For example, if your employer fell and you realised you didn't know how to deal with this. By attending some training on moving and assisting you will feel more confident and able to deal with this situation if it happens again.
- If you work in a team with other personal assistants, you and your employer may want to consider group learning or each personal assistant attending different training courses to compliment each others strengths.
- Think about your future career and whether obtaining a formal qualification may help you now and in the future.



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People learn in different ways.

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## Apprenticeships

In addition to qualifications or short courses, you and your employer may consider that an Apprenticeship is the best option.

- An Apprenticeship is a combination of on and off the job training and learning.
- They are open to people of all ages.
- Apprenticeships aren't just for new staff; you can do one as an experienced personal assistant, already working for someone.
- An Apprenticeship allows you to develop your skills while your employer gets the support they need.

For more information about Apprenticeships, the benefits, different levels, funding and much more go to: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Apprenticeships](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Apprenticeships).

## Qualifications

Qualifications can help you and your employer grow your skills and build on your experiences and knowledge through a more formal process of learning and assessment. There are three different sizes of qualification:

- the larger **Level 3** demonstrate professional competence
- the smaller **Level 2**, and **Level 1**, demonstrate knowledge or competence in specific areas.

For more information about qualifications [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications)

## Practical Considerations

- How the learning will take place: in a classroom, online e-learning or whether it should take place within your employer's home. If, as part of your learning, someone will watch you do something or assess you, you will need to understand what you might need to do and how this might impact your employer.
- How much time it will take to complete your learning: this can range from a few hours, weeks or longer if it is a qualification.
- Whether someone will need to cover your shift whilst you are learning.
- How much the learning will cost (including hidden costs for things like workbooks). If you are attending a training course for example, the price of training differs greatly depending on the learning provider. However, you may be also able to find free training provided by a local authority.
- Whether or not your employer will pay you whilst you are learning.
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Decide the best  
available option  
and decide  
which one to  
use, and be  
sure to  
be clear.

Once a learning provider has been selected

Once a learning provider has been selected

Consider a training provider

It would be better to choose a training provider who understands the unique relationship and challenges of individual employers and personal assistants.

If you are looking for other training (including short courses), we would recommend that you search online or contact local training companies to see what they offer.

Local authorities, unions, direct payment support organisations ([www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lepahub](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lepahub)), and other local organisations may be able to support you and your employer to find a suitable training provider or training course. Some might offer training that is provided free of charge.

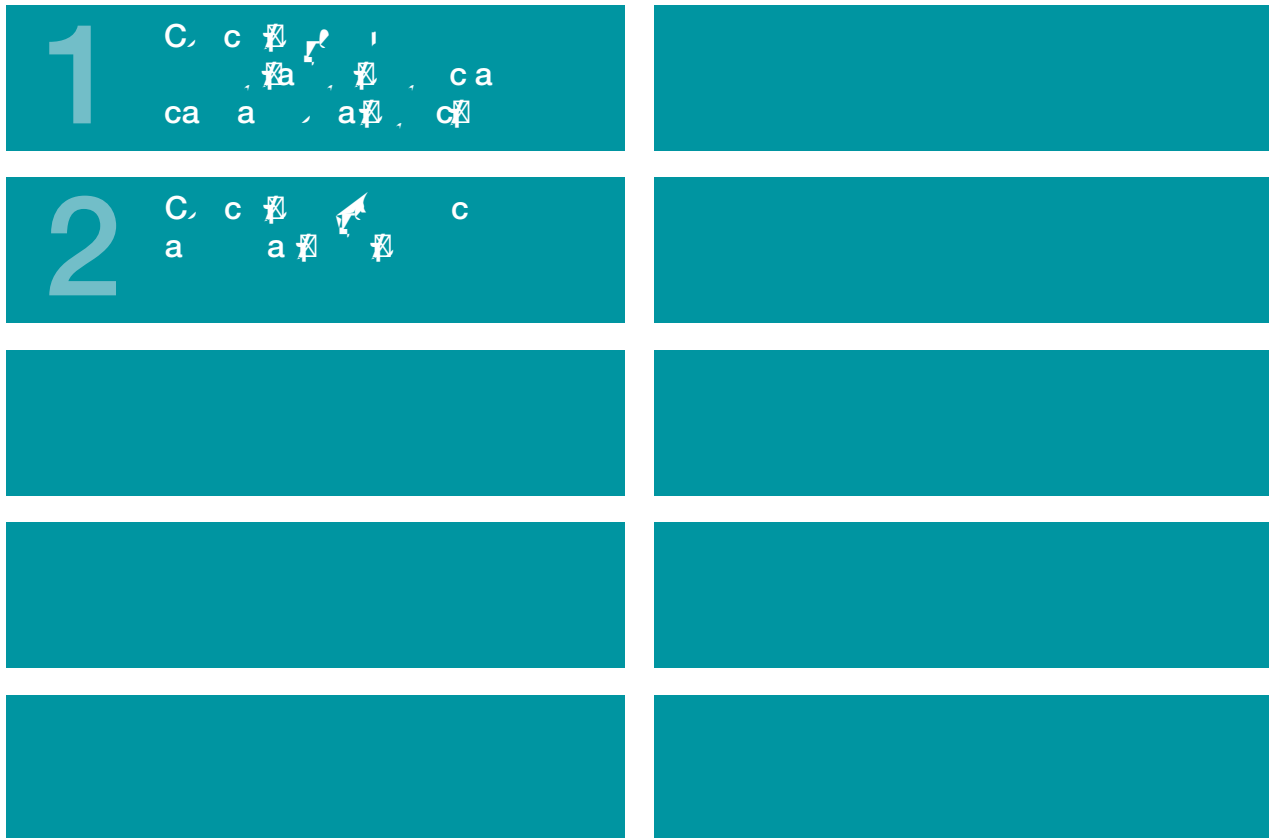
If your employer has a personal health budget the NHS organisation issuing this budget may be able to offer either support to find training or places on their own training. Funding for any training identified in the care planning process should be included in an employers budget.

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## 10 Top Tips for Choosing a Learning Provider:

These tips have been developed for employers and give suggestions about what they should find out before committing to choosing a provider.



These top ten tips are available in a small set of cards. For a free set, email [marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk)

For more information about choosing a learning provider (or workforce learning) go to [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningproviders](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/learningproviders) email [info@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:info@skillsforcare.org.uk) or call 0113 241 1275.

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## 6. Re a e e ea

As part of regular informal discussions or arranged reviews between you and your employer, there should be an opportunity to review and talk about your on-going learning and development.

Update your learning record (or other written record) following reviews and share this with your employer. You and your employer should both have copies of this.

Remember to keep your learning needs form and/or record in a secure place.

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For paper copies of any of the resources listed here, contact [info@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:info@skillsforcare.org.uk) or call 0113 241 1275.

## F

Skills for Care has funding available for individual employers to cover the full costs of learning and development for themselves and their personal assistants. It can pay not only for the cost of the training itself, but also for the cost of cover (that is to pay for a replacement personal assistant) and any travel costs. There is no limit to the number of times employers can apply for funding. [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployerfunding](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployerfunding)

## Apprenticeships

Skills for Care has produced an Apprenticeships guide specifically for employers and personal assistants. This guide includes information about Apprenticeship schemes and details of the funding available for an Apprenticeship. [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers)

## National Apprenticeship Service

Being an apprentice gives you the opportunity to gain a recognised qualification and develop professional skills, while earning a salary. [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

## Individual Professional Development

This might be helpful to you and your employer. It is written from the point of view of the employer and can help with discussions around continuing professional development. It provides information about how your employer can support you to learn and develop new skills. [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployers)

## Guidance for employers and personal assistants

You can find out more about what is available from Skills for Care's guide. [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications)

## Skills Search

Helps you to look at the content of qualifications and choose those that will best meet your

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## Choosing a care provider

Skills for Care's *Choosing a care provider* Learning Aid provides tips of what to ask training companies to help you to choose a good one that suits you and your employers needs. [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications-and-apprenticeships](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications-and-apprenticeships)



Skills for Care's top ten tips packs are a small set of cards that include the key things you need to think about when trying to find a suitable learning provider. The cards, which can easily be used in and about the workplace, give suggestions about what you need to find out before you commit to choosing a provider. For a free set, email [marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk)

Further information and support for personal assistants is available at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lepahub](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lepahub)



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## Care

Skills for Care is the employer-led workforce development body for adult social care in England. We work with employers across England to make sure their people have the right skills and values to deliver high quality care.

Home of the National Skills Academy for Social Care, we offer workforce learning and development support and practical resources from entry level right through to those in leadership and management roles.

By working with employers and sharing best practice, we help raise quality and standards across the whole sector and ensure dignity and respect are at the heart of service delivery.

For more detailed information about what we do and how we can help please visit

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)  
Telephone 0113 245 1716  
(9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

Further information and support for personal assistants is available at

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lepahub](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lepahub)

# Appendix 1:

## Learning needs form for a personal assistant

To be completed during discussions with your employer to determine your learning needs and how they will be met.

Name
Start date
Reference

Objectives What needs to be achieved? (List objectives in arabic)	Activities and resources Describe activities and resources	Who is responsible?	What are the expected outcomes?	Date achieved	Date completed	Comments (if any)



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