

# The work of Skills for Health

Purpose : To highlight strategic intent and role of Skills for Health in context of :

- *Skills for Health – our role, purpose*
- *Sector Skills Agreement and strategic direction*
- *Key work strands and developments relevant to HPC*
- *Scope for further synergies between SfH and HPC*

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# Skills for Health – Aim/Mission

## Strategic Intent

*Develop a skilled, flexible and productive workforce for the whole health sector in all UK nations to raise the quality of health and healthcare for the public, patients and service users*

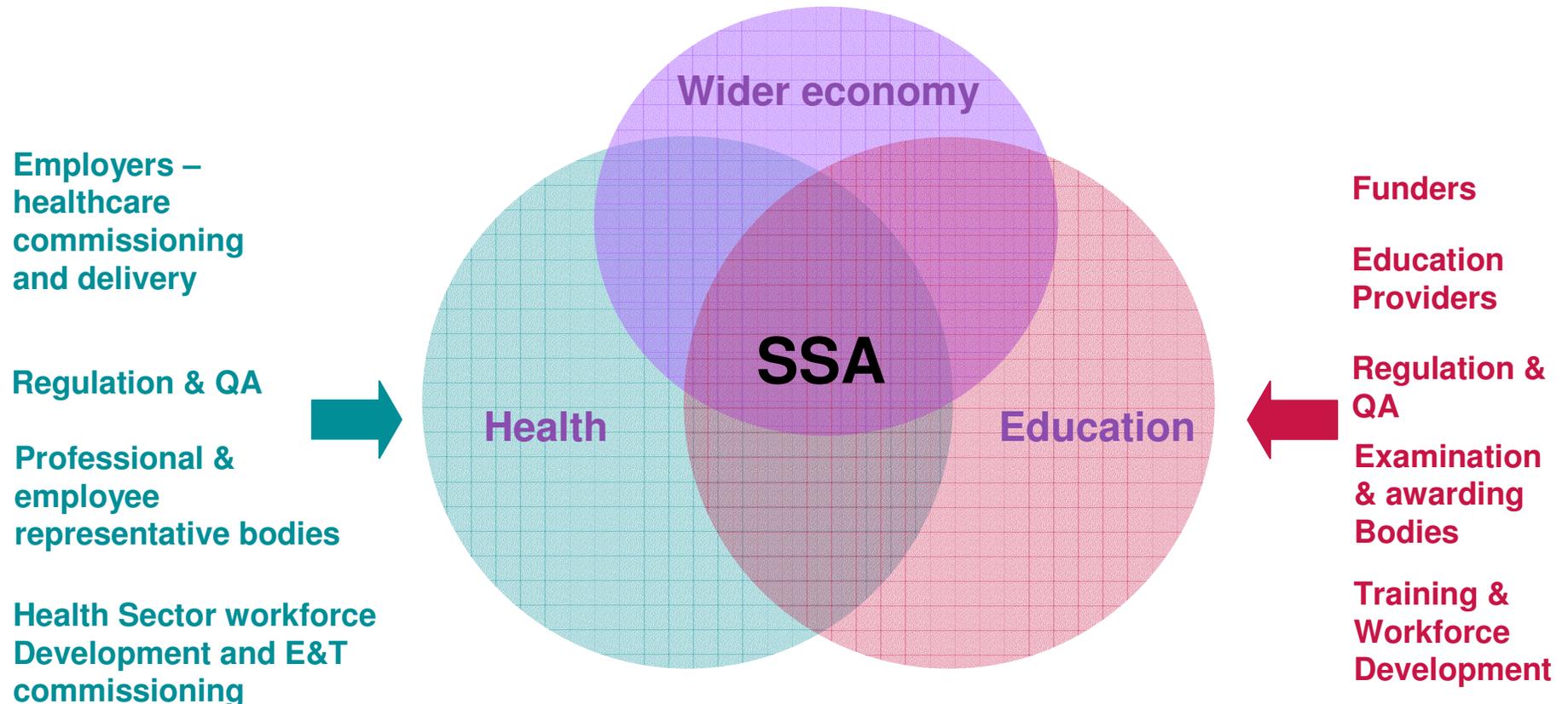
*Through:*

- Developing and managing national workforce competences
- Profiling the UK workforce
- Identifying and articulating sector workforce needs
- Improving workforce skills
- Influencing education and training supply
- Working closely with health sector employers and our partners

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# The Sector Skills Agreement for health



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# Leitch Review

## Vision: UK - a world leader in skills by 2020:

- **95% of working age adults to achieve functional literacy and numeracy** – up from 85% literacy and 80% numeracy today. This means 680,000 basic skills attainment per year against 110,000 today.
- **More than 90% of workforce adults qualified to at least Level 2** – up from 70% today. 95% means 1.7 million more adults with Level 2 and 500,000 people achieving Level 2 each year against 280,000 today.
- **Intermediate skills balance shifts from Level 2 to Level 3**, improving the esteem, quantity and quality of intermediate skills. Double apprenticeships to 500,000. 300,000 people to achieve Level 3 each year against 110k today.
- **More than 40% of the adult population qualified to Level 4 and above**, up from 29% today. This means 530,000 people a year against 250,000 now.

## The 'Skills Pledge'

### SSA and SSC's as major mechanisms for achieving the vision

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# Implications of Leitch for SSCs

Empower SSCs to focus on:

- *Taking the lead role in developing occupational standards, approving vocational qualifications;*
- *Taking the lead role in collating and communicating sector labour market data;*
- *Raising employer engagement, demand and investment; and*
- *Considering collective employer action to address specific sector skills needs.*

# SSA Key Aim / Objectives

## ***Aim:***

***Develop a skilled and flexible workforce based on nationally recognised competences***

## ***Objectives:***

- Build a UK-wide system of recognised competences
- Easier access to a modern, transferable set of qualification and Quality Assurance frameworks
- Make it easier for employers to access and influence education and training
- Common workforce data & information across UK
- Creative education provision & learning design solutions
- Strengthened partnership working - levers, investment and skills action

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# SSA: The Case for Change – What do we want to achieve?

## Convergence of strategic drivers

*Changing healthcare needs of  
population*

*Workforce policies (impact of  
AfC/MMC/EWTD)*

*Financial /economic*

*Demographic*

*Knowledge / technology*

*Other strategic drivers*

***Modelling shape of  
future workforce***

More flexible  
workforce

Competence  
based workforce  
Planning/  
development

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# The Agreements (UK and country specific)

- Employers – NHS, Independent, Voluntary and Community sector
- Govt Health and Education Depts
- Universities UK
- Association of Colleges
- HE and FE funding bodies
- Trades Unions (affiliated and non-affiliated)
- QA bodies
- Qualification Regulatory Bodies
- Statutory and Regulatory Professional bodies – partnership principles
- Memorandum of Understanding with UK sector workforce planning/LMI bodies/agencies
- English Regions – By end 2007

# SSA: Current position

## Current activity:

- *Finalising agreements in Wales and Northern Ireland – Oct 2007*
- *Exploring consequences of the ‘case for change’, modelling and scenario planning for the future – informing workforce planning and commissioning decisions needed – across sector*
- *Press launch July 3<sup>rd</sup> – allied to significant agreement with LSC and sector*
- *Implementation agenda – centrality to emergent 3-5 yr Strategic plan and 2007/8 operational objectives – shared with partners*
- *England Regional Agreements – translation and application of national and regional plans – ‘fit’ with Regional Skills Partnerships/agendas*
- *Plans for monitoring and evaluation – short terms wins and maintaining longer term momentum*

# Particular areas of interest

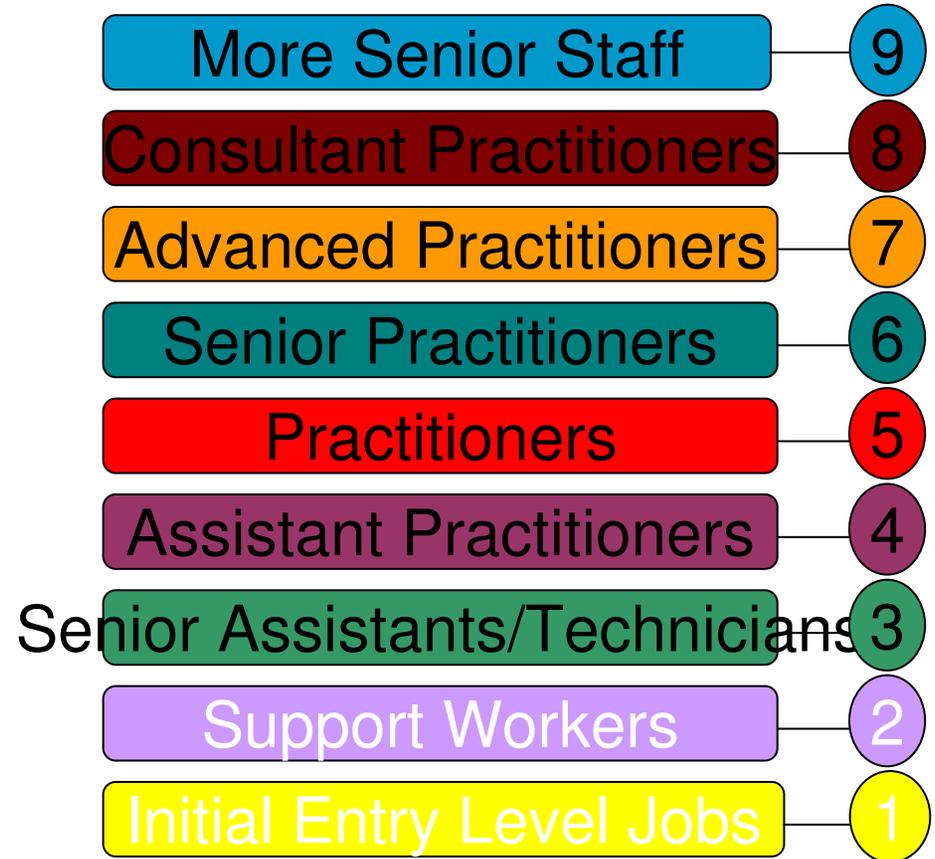
- Modernising AHP Careers
- HE Strategy
- Quality Assurance

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# Modernising AHP Careers

- Identify National Workforce competences to cover functions carried out by AHPs
- Develop a competence-based career framework and map transferable roles.
- Modernising Education and training to support the Career framework



# Higher Education Strategy

Summary: See Separate presentation, Strategy document and the Awards/Qualification Process document.

A three year plan based on concurrent work streams that includes research, education and training on competences, and UK Wide Higher Education Demonstration Sites to inform guidelines to award development, assessment, Quality Assurance and commissioning.

Seeks to:

- research and evaluate the dynamics of the roles of the key stakeholders in HEI/employer partnerships.
- develop awards with modules that are role based (and available for professional CPD), are service demand led and flexible, with multiple stepping on and off points along educational pathways linked to personal career plans and KSF profiles.

Sites focus on FE/HE interface (including degrees to practitioner awards) and/or negotiated learning routes for post-registration awards.

Based on implementation and testing of a model of Higher Education pathway design underpinned by Skills for Health Learning Design Principles.

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# Quality Assurance

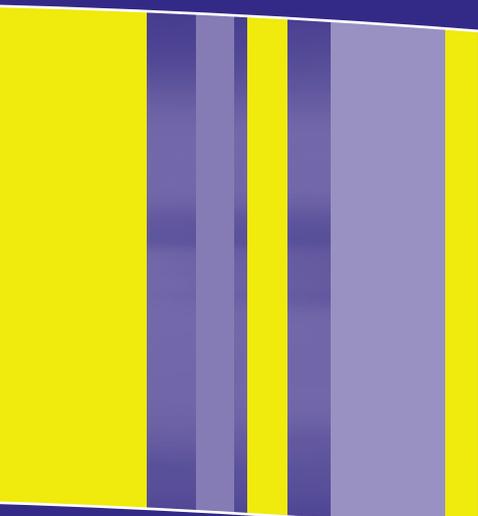
- QA Partners Forum
- Mapping of QA standards and processes
- Statement of Shared Principles
- Developing a QA Framework for commissioners (in England)
- Feasibility of a partnership QA 'web-based tool'
- Reviewing subject benchmarks for NHS-funded HE
- National Occupational Standard (NOS) for QA

# Scope for synergies with HPC

- Collective influence on identified common agendas
- Sharing workforce data and LMI
- Sharing research and evaluation - of impact across common agendas
- Competence; regulation - new roles/ways of working in light of Foster/White paper;
- Career and qualification frameworks (AHP strategy); HE strategy; Quality Assurance
- Influencing learning design, education commissioning and funding/planning cycles for FE/HE
- Formalising our joint work/action agenda?

# Sector Skills Agreement for Health Executive Summary (England)

DELIVERING A FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE  
TO SUPPORT BETTER HEALTHCARE  
AND HEALTHCARE SERVICES



**Sector Skills** Agreement

better **skills** ■ better **jobs** ■ better **health**



# Sector Skills Agreement for Health Executive Summary (England)

## Introduction

This executive summary outlines the main features of the first Sector Skills Agreement for health. The Sector Skills Agreement promotes a strategy for transforming the skills of the workforce to support improved services for patients and the population. It is strongly supported by Ministers, Government Departments, employers, Trades Unions and other key partners.

**The major strategic aim of the SSA is to:**

Raise the quality of health and healthcare for the public, patients and service users throughout the UK – through a skilled and flexible workforce based on nationally recognised competences.

## Changes in the health sector driving changes in the demand for skills and learning provision

**The demand and need for health and healthcare services is changing rapidly in response to the key drivers of:**

- An ageing population, with implications both for the health care workforce and future service demands.
- The growth in chronic diseases and long term illness.
- Increasing emergency hospital admissions.
- Changing financial regimes.

**As a consequence, the provision of services is also changing with:**

- An increased focus on public health.
- Greater responsiveness to the population's needs and expectations.
- More use of patient pathways, multi-professional and multi-disciplinary working.
- More diversity in and a changing balance between community and hospital based services.
- The introduction of new technologies.
- Organisational change and the need for increased productivity.

**At the same time workforce changes are focused on:**

- Reforming and Modernising Medical Careers (MMC) and other health professional careers.
- Agenda for Change (AfC) pay reform in the NHS with an associated Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF).
- Addressing the implications of the European Working Time Directive 2008/9 (EWTD) and the impact of an ageing workforce.
- The requirement for new and extended roles.

### Parallel reforms in the education sector are geared towards:

- Promoting greater responsiveness and innovation in the delivery of learning.
- The need for more seamless progression pathways and recognition of work – based learning.
- Lifelong learning, literacy, numeracy and IT skills policies – with emphasis on unlocking the potential of many people and ensuring continued employability through access to continuous learning and development opportunities.

### What the health Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) seeks to achieve

In the light of these changes, the SSA for health brings together a coherent strategy based on consensus across the sector and the UK to develop a flexible workforce based on nationally recognised competences.

**The SSA aim embodies Skills for Health’s purpose – to help the whole sector develop solutions that deliver a skilled and flexible workforce to improve health and healthcare. The SSA will help secure this through a series of UK wide and country specific agreements with partners across the sector.**

The six strategic objectives for the SSA on which partner agreements are based, have been developed and reinforced through extensive consultation with the sector. They are summarised below:

1 – Progress the development of a UK-wide system of nationally recognised competences.
2 – Establish modern and consistent qualification and quality assurance frameworks and assessments.
3 – Develop common UK workforce data systems and information.
4 – Promote innovative skills development solutions.
5 – Develop mechanisms to strengthen employer commitment and engagement with the skills agenda.
6 – Strengthen partnership working.

**Partnership and commitment to the aims and objectives of the SSA will help ensure:**

- Recognition of the sector in **realising the potential and increasing the productivity of its workforce.**
- Employers more directly **influencing investment in and commissioning of the supply of skills** to support their organisational goals and priorities.
- **Employees accessing more innovative learning provision**, responsive to the needs of employers and staff, encouraging wider participation, supporting lifelong learning, employability and recognition of achievement for the whole workforce.

The action agenda set out in this SSA executive summary establishes the basis for the **beginning of a long term development** through key agreements which will need to adapt and flex as the sector's systems, service and workforce policies, market conditions and structures evolve. For details on the agreements see section 5 in the main SSA Stage 5 Action Plan for England. A summary of the key stages, findings, issues, agreements and partners is included below.

## SSA key Stages

**The five stage SSA process has covered an assessment of current and future skills needs:**

- Stage 1:** a review of existing education and training supply.
- Stage 2:** an analysis of gaps between supply and demand and the development of a 'Case for Change'.
- Stage 3:** an assessment of the scope for collaborative action by employers and other stakeholders to help tackle skills deficits.
- Stage 4:** the development of the SSA action plan.
- Stage 5:** leading to a series of major agreements with key partners.

Each stage has been interactive. Skills for Health has engaged employers across the NHS, independent and voluntary parts of the sector together with delivery partners and wider range of stakeholders. This has happened through specific consultation events, workshops and extensive gathering and publication of quantitative and qualitative evidence and intelligence.

The results and reports of our earlier stages can be accessed on [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

## Headline findings and implications

Quantitative analysis undertaken in Stages 1 and 2 showed that the healthcare workforce has grown significantly in recent years to about 2 million people, and that compared with other sectors of the economy, the workforce is highly educated and professionally qualified, but increasingly dependent on part time workers and females. However, there are significant internal competence gaps.

Historical evidence masks a significant gap in developing the competences of the still large proportion of the workforce that is neither qualified nor educated to at least degree level. It also does not highlight the need for more flexible career development pathways for healthcare professionals. Qualitative evidence and intelligence confirms that employers will require a more flexible workforce in the future based on agreed and **nationally recognised** competences required to deliver patient care. Whilst the SSA reflects action across all parts of the workforce, developing the competences of staff without a degree or professional qualification is a major cornerstone of the agreements in place.

Stage 3 of the SSA explored the main strategic drivers affecting the healthcare workforce over the next few years; and how they combine to inform ‘the Case for Change’. To support this, modelling work relevant to the NHS, voluntary and independent parts of the sector in England has begun to explore how quickly change might be achieved. This includes the consequential impact on education commissioning decisions by Government and employers through the substantial investment currently spent on educating, training and developing the sector workforce.

The convergence of known strategic drivers has led to the development of the key theme of the SSA – that healthcare employers require a more flexible workforce underpinned by a workforce planning approach that examines the competences required rather than just relying on the ‘traditional’ job roles of the present and past. The diagram below illustrates this:

## Convergence of strategic drivers



## Themes informing overall SSA solutions, objectives and agreements

The SSA is a UK-wide strategy, as are the strategic drivers illustrated above. However, there are crucial differences between the four UK countries; not just in context and cultural terms; but also in structural, institutional, legislative and policy terms. Whilst a single set of solutions for the UK is not appropriate there are many common elements including:

- The development of a strategic direction based on a more flexible workforce and supported by competence based workforce planning.
- The strategic direction developed in the context of modern pay, career, qualifications and regulatory frameworks. Some of the requisite modernisation has already occurred, but much more needs to be done.
- The development of models, which whilst pointing in the same direction, contemplate different paces at which change could be delivered. This is to take account of the different situations within each country and the English regions.
- An assumption that in the longer term (10 – 20 years ahead) a significant percentage of jobs in the sector would be in ‘new roles’ underpinned by the appropriate competences. Work is underway to arrive at an initial assessment of this percentage, the period over which it could be achieved and the need to build in review and revision as changes in the sector evolve.
- An expectation that many of the new roles would be at Band 4 level in the NHS ‘Agenda for Change’ pay system – including ‘Assistant Practitioners’ and similar roles. This would be the main vehicle for driving up the competence base of the workforce that is currently underdeveloped. However, this development will also need to ensure that a ‘skills escalation’ strategy is applied so that staff who begin in ‘starter jobs’ can be progressively developed to make the most of their talents within a more flexible workforce.
- A flattening in the current demand for professionally qualified staff in ‘traditional’ professional roles. This would be partly offset by further ‘new’ roles for healthcare professions based on national and locally determined service priorities across the sector. There would be key opportunities for professionals to develop competences according to the needs of patients and in response to the strategic drivers and policy priorities in each country. Some would develop their competences within their existing professions. Others would acquire competences that crossed traditional boundaries with a more consistent development of ‘Advanced Roles’.
- An assumption that whilst short and medium terms actions can be put in place now, workforce transformation will take ten years or potentially longer to achieve. This is to ensure that implementation is planned and phased effectively, without destabilising capacity and capability during and following a transitional period.

To achieve the vision of workforce transformation encompassed in the SSA, a number of agreements have been established. They cover the objectives identified from earlier SSA stages and involve a multiplicity of delivery partners and stakeholders. Agreements are both UK wide and country specific, reflecting each country's policy contexts, systems, organisations and bodies.

**The key stakeholders and partners to the agreements (or plans to achieve agreements) include:**

- Employers (including employer bodies) in the four countries.
- Government Departments.
- Trades Unions.
- Education commissioners and funding bodies.
- Education providers (including representative bodies).
- Statutory and regulatory professional bodies (principles for partnership working).
- Education regulatory bodies.
- Quality Assurance bodies (principles for partnership working).
- Other key stakeholders including professional bodies and external partners who are critical to the success of the SSA in its early stages and in terms of implementation and impact evaluation.

**Already in place or in progress as integral elements of linked agreements is:**

- A UK wide workforce competence framework – the building blocks for workforce change and skills development - with interactive tools and applications for employers and organisations to use and draw from in re-thinking their workforce – with case studies of the benefits of this approach in practice locally.
- An emergent sector qualifications strategy – against which sector employers and education providers can prioritise future workforce, competence and qualifications provision.
- An emergent sector careers framework – linked to the qualifications strategy and ensuring new role developments areas are recognised through appropriate career pathways;
- An England wide education quality assurance (QA) partnership framework to drive quality enhancement, ensure accountability and minimise the burden of QA – with potential UK wide principles on the sharing of good practice, agreed between partners.
- A Foundation Degree framework – setting out the key criteria and employer requirements for these new qualifications – together with the development of pilot sites (sponsored by DfES/DH) to ensure strong linkages between Foundation Degree provision and the emergence of new roles paid at the equivalent of the NHS band 4 roles (Agenda for Change) in service priority areas such as reducing waiting times, public health and diagnostic services.
- Work to develop a National Skills Academy with integral e-learning solutions and Information, advice and guidance to support flexible and accessible learning provision through strong partnership with health and social care Centres of Vocational Excellence (COVES) and other key networks in England.

- Support of three national and two regional ‘demonstration sites’ through 2006/7 to focus on application of the use of competence based approaches to developing new roles – how national policy priorities can be translated at local level and to share and disseminate the learning and evidence generated.
- The emergence of Skills for Health coordinated employer engagement mechanisms at regional levels to ensure strengthened alignment and synergy with existing networks such as Health and Education Strategic Partnerships (HESPs), Social Care partnerships, HEFCE Lifelong Learning Networks and Regional Skills Partnerships.
- The development of a new health and social care diploma to realise one of the major priorities of the 14 – 19 education agenda and ensure more systematic opportunities for widening access and progression into health service careers.
- Close work with the Learning and Skills Council and the Department of Health National Director for Widening Participation to develop clear mechanisms for influencing the annual LSC planning cycle, increase learning opportunities for employees disadvantaged and excluded in the past and to ensure the most effective use of sector and LSC funding in future years.
- A UK-wide labour market intelligence conference and workshop to appraise and develop mechanisms for the improved production and utilisation of workforce data and information.

## The Agreements

### UK Framework SSA Agreements

- Employers.
- Government Depts.
- Universities UK.
- Trades Unions (affiliated and non-affiliated).
- QA bodies (principles of partnership working).
- Qualification Regulatory bodies (letter of agreement to work in partnership on key priorities).
- Statutory and Regulatory professional bodies (proposed areas of partnership working).
- Memorandum of Understanding with UK sector workforce planning/LMI bodies/agencies.

### England National Agreements

- Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills.
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC).
- Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE).
- National Director Widening Participation in Learning.
- Association of Colleges (Subject to agreement).
- Learn Direct.
- Investors in People.

### England Regional Agreements

Skills for Health Regional Directors are in dialogue to negotiate, align and map national sector priorities with regional priorities and draw up agreements with regional partners including the Regional Development Agencies/Regional Skills Partnerships – in place by early 2007.

### Further Agreements to be developed

During coming months and through 2007 Skills for Health will be seeking to develop further agreements with professional bodies and other agencies and bodies such as Job Centre +, The National Institute for Innovation and Improvement, the Healthcare Commission and other relevant partners.

## Implementation

Successful implementation depends on action at national, regional and local levels. The SSA is therefore crucially dependent on local healthcare, education and economic development organisations working together over a sustained period to deliver the degree of change envisaged. Full plans for implementation are detailed in section 8 of the main SSA stage 5 action plan for England.

Skills for Health will be coordinating a series of sector events across the UK and regionally in 2006/7 to share and disseminate the SSA and support the development of regional and local plans for implementation. We will also be pursuing how the SSA can become an integral part of performance management systems. Most importantly, although there are many quick wins in terms of new developments and actions, the SSA is about the long term – not the short term. The SSA sets out a strategic direction which will tackle the consequences of known strategic drivers on a coherent and sustainable basis. The resulting action plans at both national, regional and local level will need to build on UK wide 'framework agreements. Through impact evaluation, quarterly and annual monitoring systems we are building into the process, they will need to demonstrate tangible and measurable benefits in the short to medium term.





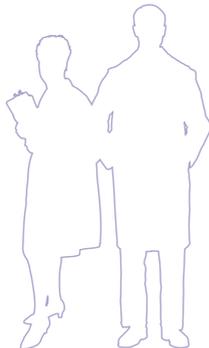
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The logo for Skills for Business, featuring the text "skills" in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, with "FOR BUSINESS" in a smaller, all-caps, white sans-serif font below it. The text is positioned to the right of a vertical bar that is part of a series of vertical bars of varying shades of blue that run down the right side of the page.

skills  
FOR BUSINESS

# Strategic Intent



better **skills**  
better **jobs**  
better **health**

A blurred photograph of a hospital operating room. In the foreground, a woman in blue scrubs is looking down. In the background, another person in blue scrubs and a white surgical cap is visible. The word "Strategic" is overlaid in purple text.

Strategic

# Intent

This summary sets out Skills for Health's strategic aims and objectives for transforming the skills of the workforce to raise the quality of health and healthcare for the public, patients and service users.



The strategic aims have been developed in the context of:

- *The Leitch Review of Skills in the Global Economy* which places Sector Skills Councils at the forefront of meeting the UK's economic challenges in respect of future skills requirements.
- a series of Sector Skills agreements in each UK country setting out the partnership working that will develop the flexible workforce, based on nationally recognised competences, which the sector requires
- a more detailed strategic plan which has been published on our website:  
[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)





Achieving our strategic aims and intent will benefit:

- **patients and service users** through improved workforce skills which ensure safe delivery of service and increased quality of care tailored to their needs
- **health sector employers** to realise the potential, skills transferability and productivity of their workforce and more directly influence investment and commissioning of the supply of skills
- **individuals** to access skills and learning which helps them achieve their potential and enhance their contribution to improving care
- **learning providers and Awarding Bodies** by giving clear strategic direction about the needs of employers; and how this will support design and delivery of innovative learning, promoting wider participation, employability and recognition of achievement for the whole workforce

A photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, wearing a blue V-neck top and a pearl necklace, smiling warmly. She is holding the hand of an elderly man with white hair and glasses, who is wearing a grey polo shirt with white and maroon stripes. They are both looking down at their hands, which are clasped together. The background is a brightly lit indoor space, possibly a care facility, with a framed picture on the wall and a vase of flowers on a shelf.

# The Workforce

# Challenge

The demand and need for health and healthcare services is changing rapidly in response to:

- an ageing population, with implications both for the health care workforce and future service demands
- the growth in chronic diseases and long term illness
- increasing emergency hospital admissions
- changing financial regimes

These factors are impacting on changes in the provision of services with:

- an increased focus on public health
- greater responsiveness to the population's needs and expectations
- more use of patient pathways, multi-professional and multi-disciplinary working
- more diversity in, and a changing balance between, community and hospital based services
- the introduction of new technologies
- organisational change and the need for increased productivity



At the same time workforce change within the health sector is focused on:

- strategies to attract people to work in, or return to, careers in the health sector through a wider range of entry routes and qualification pathways
- the removal of barriers which limit opportunities for those with potential to progress their careers and to gain competences and qualifications
- incentives for staff to constantly renew and extend their skills and knowledge in order to develop and sustain new roles and ways of working
- developing a workforce profile more representative of the health and social care communities it serves
- addressing the implications of the European Working Time Directive and the impact of an ageing workforce

There are also parallel reforms in the education sector aimed at:

- promoting greater responsiveness and innovation in the delivery of learning
- establishing more seamless progression pathways and recognition of work-based learning
- developing policies to support lifelong learning, literacy, numeracy and IT skills with an emphasis on unlocking potential and ensuring continued employability through access to continuous learning and development opportunities



However the health sector still faces significant challenges in addressing the skills needs of the present and future workforce including:

- skills shortages and gaps across a number of occupations, particularly in areas requiring new roles
- inconsistent workforce data and workforce planning
- the diversity of professions and occupations in the sector with limited integration of education and training arrangements
- continuing barriers to skills development as a result of inequalities in funding across different workforce groups
- prospective reforms to the regulation of professional and other staff
- the need to develop employability as an integral element of workforce skills and development
- meeting the need for innovative learning design solutions and more creative, customised learning to support work-based skill development

A young woman with brown hair, wearing a purple short-sleeved uniform, is smiling warmly and holding the hand of an elderly woman. The elderly woman has short white hair, wears glasses, and a blue patterned sweater. They are in a brightly lit indoor setting, possibly a care home or hospital room. The background shows a doorway and a lamp.

# Meeting the

# Challenge

Skills for Health is taking forward Sector Skills Agreements and working with and through its partners to meet the challenge of developing a highly skilled, occupationally competent and flexible workforce. A workforce that is capable of responding to the rapid advancement of the global economy and the changing characteristics of labour markets and healthcare across the UK and Europe. Our over-arching strategic intent is to:

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“Develop a skilled flexible and productive workforce for the whole health sector in all UK nations, to raise the quality of health and healthcare for the public, patients and service users”

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To deliver this intent Skills for Health has four key strategic aims. We will work with and through partners to achieve:

## Strategic Aim 1

**Engage with health sector employers to ensure we can be the authoritative sector voice on skills and workforce development for the whole sector.**

- Engage effectively with health sector employers so that the Skills for Health Board and Council are recognised as the authoritative sector voice on the skills and development of the workforce for the whole sector.
- Engage with a wide range of employers across the whole health sector through a coordinated marketing and communications strategy, to ensure we understand and can represent their perspectives and needs.
- Exert influence on behalf of employers at national, UK and European level on government policies that have an impact on workforce skills.
- Build alliances and partnerships, across health, education and economic development agencies to support the implementation of the Sector Skills Agreements.
- Secure support and a wider range of income streams from employers and other agencies for the work of Skills for Health.



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## Strategic Aim 2

**Inform the development and application of workforce policy through research and the provision of robust labour market intelligence.**

- Profile the UK workforce, interpret the data and disseminate labour market intelligence on trends and issues in the UK and international health workforce.
- Lead, and with partners, deliver a coherent and consistent UK-wide approach to the identification, use and application of labour market information and intelligence.
- Build credibility with employers, partners and sponsors to be recognised as the authoritative source of sector labour market intelligence for the whole UK health sector.
- Deliver and disseminate authoritative research on priority issues which is used to inform and influence workforce policy.
- Evaluate the impact and outcome of key activities.

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## Strategic Aim 3

**Implement solutions which deliver a skilled, flexible and modernised workforce capable of improving productivity, performance and reducing health inequalities.**

- Implement, review and continually renew the UK-wide, national and regional Sector Skills Agreements.
- Enable the recognition and transferability of achievement within the UK and Europe to meet the needs of employers and learners, including the development of a rationalised framework of qualifications.
- Influence the funding, commissioning and supply of education, training and development to reduce skills gaps.
- Champion the development of innovative education, training and development solutions, including e-learning.
- Co-ordinate a shared approach to cost effective quality assurance of healthcare education, helping to optimise patient safety and wherever possible reduce the regulatory burden on education providers.
- Support the development of innovative, patient and user focussed service redesign and new ways of working, including skills mix choices and appropriate use of existing, extended and new roles within modernised healthcare careers.
- Enable individuals entering and in the workforce, including those with disabilities, to gain access to learning, invest in, value and make the most of their abilities and potential. This will include easily accessible information, advice and guidance and innovative approaches to skills development and escalation.
- Help the sector modernise its approach to future workforce needs, engage in the youth agenda and build capacity to provide pre-employment work experiences.
- Improve participation in learning and employability in the health sector workforce through implementation with partners, of a strategy to improve language, literacy, numeracy and information technology skill levels.

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## Strategic Aim 4

**Champion an approach to workforce planning and development that is based on the common currency of national workforce competences.**

- Develop, maintain and review a comprehensive database of national workforce competences and ensure they are recognised as the common language and currency of workforce development.
- Produce a series of frameworks, products, tools and guides to support recognition and transferability of skills which have an excellent reputation for quality and ease of use.
- Demonstrate the benefits to the public, patients, service users and employers of a competence based approach to developing a more skilled, flexible and productive workforce.

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In pursuit of these strategic aims we are committed to respecting diversity, working inclusively and developing the capacity and capability of the organisation and all our staff, demonstrating good corporate governance, sound financial, human resource and risk management.

As an SSC we are committed to:

- improving productivity and public sector performance
- reducing skills gaps
- boosting skills across the sector including equal opportunities
- improving learning supply and playing a full part in the work of the Skills for Business Network



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Skills for Business is an employer-led network consisting of 25 Sector Skills Councils and the Sector Skills Development Agency. Through labour market intelligence, the identification of skills needs at all levels and its influence on the UK's education and learning infrastructure, the network aims to increase productivity in business and public services.



# Higher Education position paper and strategy within Skills for Health.

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# Long Term Aims

- To engage with all who use and provide Higher Education in the Health Care Sector in order to define a seamless integrated educational package with easy entry from all pre-level 4 awards and provide opportunities for numerous entry and exit points.
- To engage and work with HEIs to provide the means whereby the work of Skills for Health is discussed/presented, understood and introduced into workforce and award design to seek and produce “ambassadors” to spread and implement this work.

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# Long term aims continued

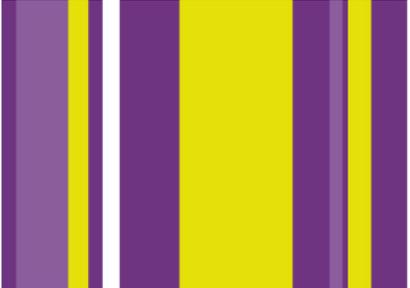
- To define standardised mechanisms for award design that encompass the function and competence enshrined in the National Occupation Standards and KSF and ensures that development of awards becomes an extended partnership between employers, employees and HEIs.
- To link development, to recognition of the student's achievement by a clear strategic rationale for development linked to a careers framework.

# Objectives for first 3 years.

- To identify and influence the key factors in award design, commissioning and promote new and existing functions, expressed as roles.
- To promote seamless pathways with particular reference to the FE/HE interface.
- To identify, influence and promote the key principles in short course, CPD and Post-registration/Postgraduate award design to move towards flexible delivery that matches the aspirations of employers and employees.
- To devise a strategy to aide the development of partnership working between key employer/commissioners and HEIs. To do this within the parameters of the Sector Skills Agreement implementation plan.

# Objectives continued

- To identify processes and practices that will aid interpretation and understanding between key stakeholders drawn from employers, employees and HEIs to the benefit of service delivery for the recipients of health care.
- To maintain and disseminate the results of the relevant research, projects and general philosophical arguments as put forward within the context of the wider SSA implementation.



# An integrated package of work streams:

Key projects to be developed with partner institutions (HEI and employers) to act as demonstrator sites across all four Countries of the UK as exemplars to inform others and aid the publication of:



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# An integrated package of work streams:

- Guidelines to support Trusts and HEIs for incorporating NOS into HE awards specification
- Assessment of competence in higher education - mapping to typology
- The development of a range of specifically focussed awards that demonstrate effective incorporation of NOS/competences in awards with particular reference to the FE / HE interface and post registration flexible learning.
- Evaluation, and dissemination of all exemplars to feed into guidelines and act as ambassadors for Skills for Health.

# HE Demonstrator Projects

- See HE position paper and strategy for rationale and philosophy underpinning these projects.
- Will largely mirror the structures and processes set up for the DH demonstrator sites (see documents associated with these).
- Will be two year projects essentially looking at processes and leadership in first year and include evaluation of product in second year.
- Has potentially £50K attached to each.

# HE Demonstrator projects

Covers two areas:

- FE-HE interface.
- Negotiated/flexible learning routes.

Will also:

- incorporate support of using NOS/Competence in developing an educational pathway.
- inform ongoing work on assessment typology for assessing competence in HE and guidance to award developers.

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## Additional supporting infrastructure:

- Writing and validation of a module on utilising NOS and competences in Human Resources management, and educational award design - first cohort in September 2007
- The formation of a Higher Education forum to act as a resource for the rapid development of our work and aid the evaluation and dissemination of the projects and their findings.

# Learning Design Principles

## MONITORING AND ENHANCEMENT OF QUALITY

Measuring of attainment. Quality Assurance

## DESIGN PROCESSES

Packages of Learning: Units/modules/Awards/Qualifications

Alignments: Level and credit transferability

Progression: Horizontal & vertical. Entry to employment

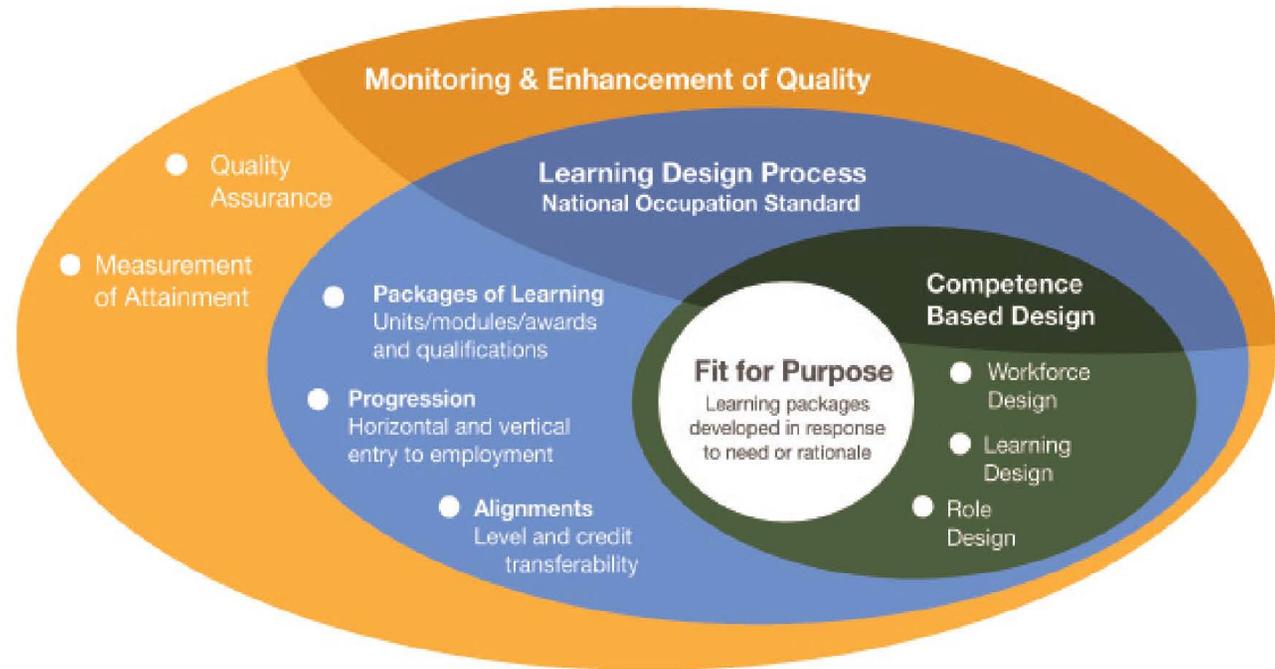
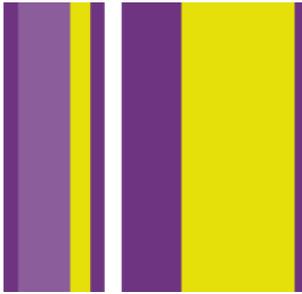
NATIONAL OCCUPATION STANDARDS/ Competences

Workforce design. Role Design. Learning needs identified

## FIT FOR PURPOSE

Learning packages need to be developed in response

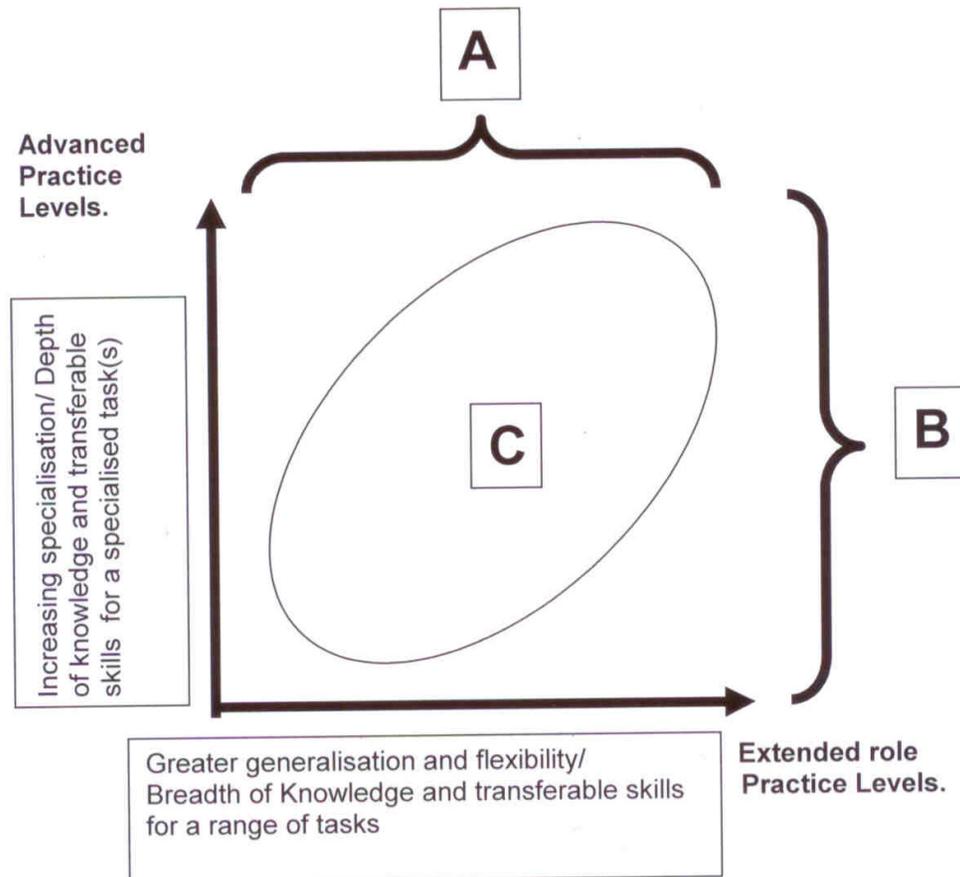
to need. **DO NOT START WITH QUALIFICATION**



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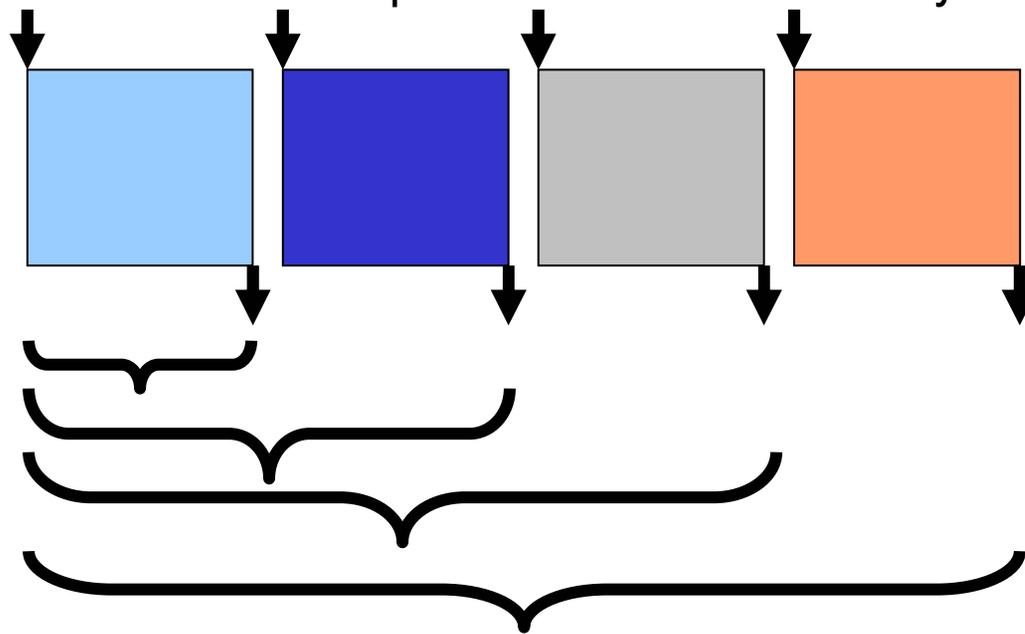
# NHS Careers: Breadth and Depth.



# Packages of Learning.

Within each wte, smaller packages as subunits of the function/role which could be modules or smaller work based learning available for professional CPD , AP(E)L to new roles incorporation into New awards.

Whole time equivalents for each of 1 year



Each stepping off point first defined by role/function and hence NOS/ competences. Also informed increasingly academic and practitioner standards. Each builds on the other to a qualification at each stepping off point.

Increasing level of specialism OR increasing breadth of knowledge

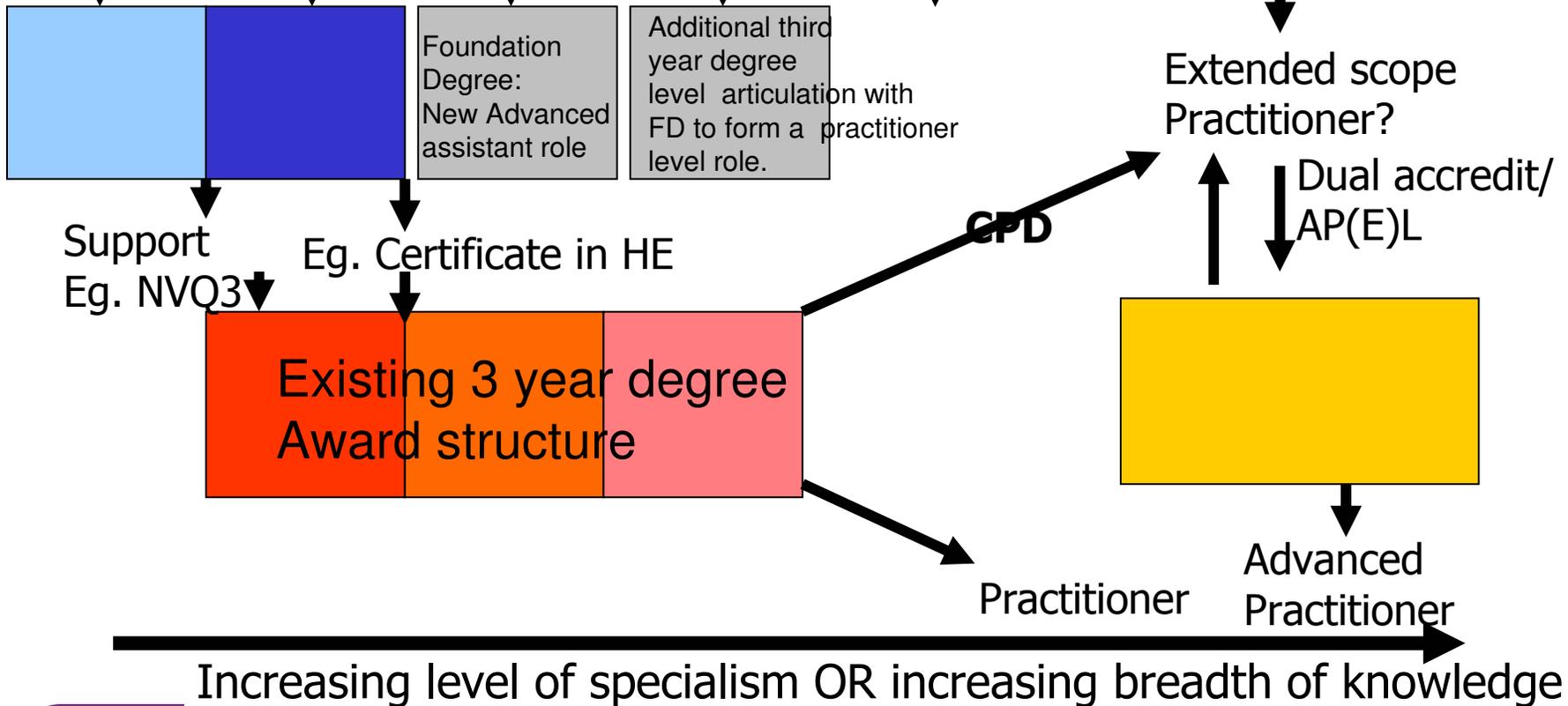
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# Links to existing structures.

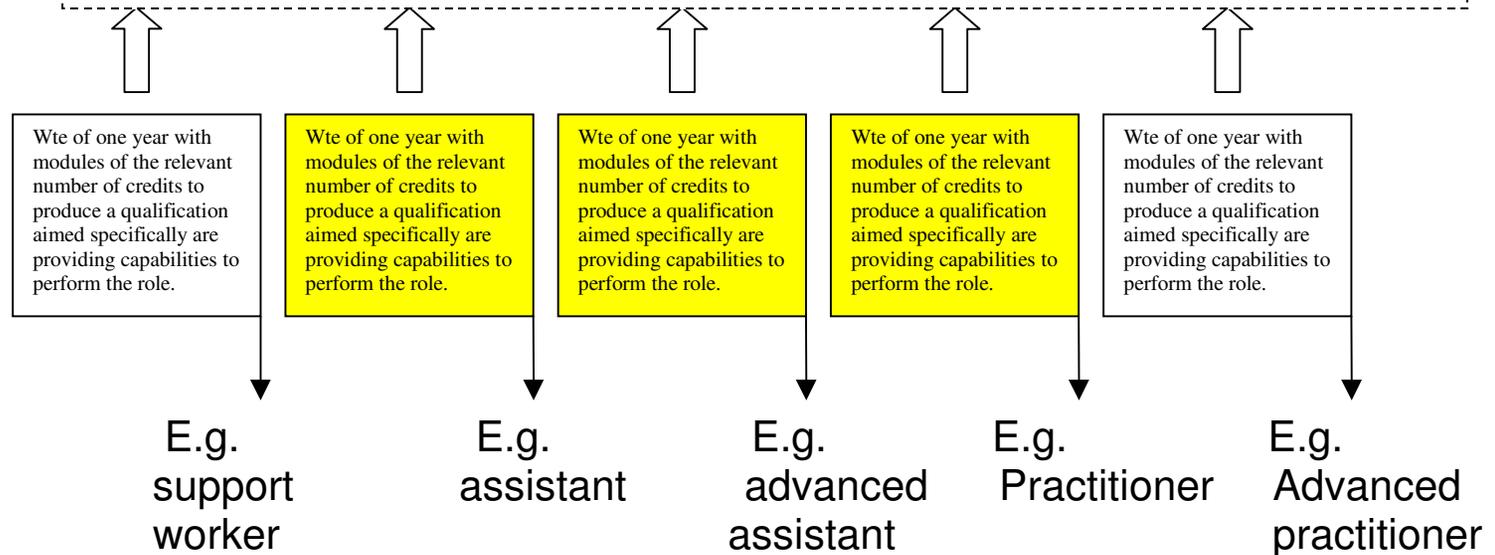
Accreditation of Small CPD and Experiential packages of learning

Scope for AP(E)L for transfer between occupations



# Example potential links to qualifications.

Potential for modules (packages of learning) from within each level to be available to existing workforce as Continuous Professional Development to increase competence and breadth of knowledge and skills without ascending academic level.



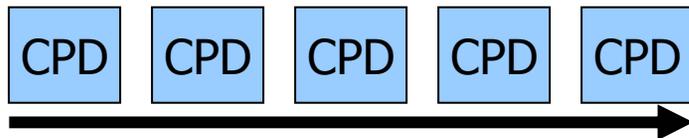
E.g. Certificate in HE

E.g. Diploma in HE or Foundation Degree

E.g. Degree

## Suggestions: Eg. Building skills for existing practitioners with dual accreditation of Clinical update.

Students enrol on a Flexible learning scheme and then study workshops grouped whereby they can demonstrate a common theme or function built from competences derived within NOS. These should be able to be studied at a student's own time and pace but with students keeping defined record on how they apply the learning in their practical situation and how they have undertaken further evidence based study to underpin the work in the work. As more workshops/study are attended they work within learning support sets and build their own portfolio and develop links between activities and their practice building an over-arching evidence of assessment activity to cover all of the learning and its application.



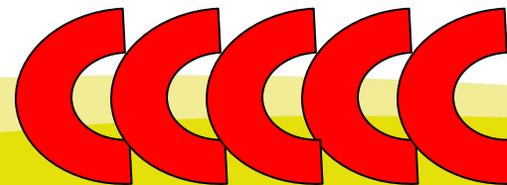
Bites sized areas of clinical skills (Notional 5 credits each)

and/or

Single negotiated modules  
and/or pre-existing modules



Over-arching assessment Eg. Portfolio leading to 30 credits to take forward into an award by negotiated learning.



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