



SRS Skills SVQ Centre

Candidate Handbook & Learning Agreement

1. Welcome to SRS Skills SVQ Centre

This handbook outlines the expectations, responsibilities, policies, and procedures relating to your SVQ qualification. It explains the support available to you, your responsibilities as a learner, and the financial and engagement conditions attached to your programme.

By enrolling onto an SVQ programme with SRS Skills SVQ Centre, learners agree to comply with the terms outlined within this handbook and the associated Learning Agreement.

2. About SRS Skills SVQ Centre

SRS Skills SVQ Centre supports learners in developing the skills, knowledge, and competencies required for professional practice within the social care sector.

SRS Skills is an accredited Qualifications Scotland (QS) Assessment Centre authorised to assess and support a range of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), including qualifications required for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Depending on your role and SSSC registration requirements, you may be required to complete:

- SVQ Level 2 Social Services & Healthcare
- SVQ Level 3 Social Services & Healthcare
- SVQ Level 4 Social Services & Healthcare
- L&D9di – Assessors Award
- L&D11 – Verifiers Award
- PDA Level 4 Units (where applicable)

These qualifications are based on Qualifications Scotland (QS) National Occupational Standards (NOS) and are recognised throughout the sector as evidence of competence and professional development.

3. Learning Agreement

Before beginning your qualification, all learners are required to sign a Learning Agreement confirming their understanding of programme expectations, responsibilities, and requirements.

The Learning Agreement supports successful completion of the qualification by clearly outlining:

- the support provided by SRS Skills
- learner responsibilities and expectations
- progress review procedures
- qualification timescales
- actions relating to missed milestones or non-engagement
- requirement for authenticity of evidence

All work and evidence submitted must be authentic, accurate, and represent the learner's own practice.

4. SRS Skills Commitment

- providing experienced and supportive assessors
- supporting learners throughout the qualification process
- ensuring assessments meet awarding body requirements
- guiding learners through portfolio development and evidence gathering
- monitoring learner progress and providing feedback
- supporting learners to achieve qualifications required for SSSC registration

5. Employer / Manager Commitment (Where Applicable)

Where applicable, employers, line managers, or workplace mentors are encouraged to:

- support learners in achieving their qualification
- provide opportunities for workplace assessment and observations
- support communication between the learner and assessor
- encourage learners to meet agreed deadlines and milestones

6. Learner Responsibilities

Learners are responsible for taking ownership of their qualification and maintaining active engagement throughout the programme.

Learners must:

- maintain regular contact with their assessor
- respond promptly to calls, emails, texts, and meeting requests
- attend scheduled sessions and provide at least 24 hours' notice if unavailable
- complete agreed tasks and evidence submissions by agreed deadlines
- participate fully in planned reviews and observations
- complete the qualification within agreed timescales
- adhere to the standards and requirements of SRS Skills SVQ Centre

Assessors will provide appropriate support and guidance throughout the programme; however, learners are responsible for maintaining communication and engagement with the qualification process.

Extensions to qualification timescales may be considered in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of SRS Skills SVQ Centre.

Learners should discuss any additional support requirements with their assessor as early as possible.

7. Induction

During induction, your assessor will:

- explain the qualification structure and assessment process
- agree your first task and submission deadline
- discuss your observations
- discuss optional units where applicable
- confirm expected completion timescales
- explain evidence requirements and portfolio expectations

Attendance at induction constitutes programme commencement.

8. Academic Integrity, AI Use & Malpractice

8.1 Academic Integrity (Plagiarism Summary)

At SRS Skills SVQ Centre, all learners are required to maintain standards of academic and professional integrity.

All assessment evidence must:

- be your own work
- reflect your real workplace practice
- be authentic, accurate, and original
- be appropriately referenced where external sources are used

What is considered plagiarism?

Plagiarism includes:

- copying work from books, websites, colleagues, or other learners
- submitting someone else's ideas or words as your own
- paraphrasing too closely without acknowledgement
- reusing previous work without permission or declaration
- presenting AI-generated content as your own work

Key expectation: You must always show where information comes from and ensure your work reflects your own knowledge and practice.

8.2 Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot) may be used in limited ways to support learning.

AI CAN be used for:

- understanding qualification content
- generating ideas or plans

- improving spelling, grammar, and structure
- supporting research and study preparation

AI MUST NOT be used for:

- producing final assessment evidence
- replacing your own knowledge or workplace performance
- creating false or fabricated evidence
- inputting confidential or service-user information
- misrepresenting AI-generated work as your own

Important rule: All submitted evidence must demonstrate your own competence and understanding. AI is a support tool only – not a substitute for your work.

Misuse of AI will be treated as plagiarism and may be investigated under centre procedures.

8.3 Malpractice (Summary)

Malpractice refers to any action that compromises the integrity of your qualification.

This includes:

- plagiarism
- cheating or copying
- falsifying evidence or workplace records
- collusion where work should be independent
- misuse of AI tools
- submitting work that is not your own

If malpractice is suspected:

- it will be investigated by SRS Skills SVQ Centre
- you may be asked to provide evidence or explanation
- outcomes depend on severity

Outcomes:

- requirement to resubmit work
- formal warning
- suspension or withdrawal from programme
- reporting to Qualifications Scotland where required

9. Qualification Timescales & Progress Milestones

All SVQ qualifications must be completed within agreed timescales. Progress is monitored through regular reviews to ensure learners remain on track to achieve their qualification within the required period.

9.1 Expected Completion Timescales

Progress Reviews

Three-Month Review

Approximately 3 months after starting:

- at least 25% of the qualification should be completed

Six to Nine-Month Review

Expected progress:

- Level 2: 75–100%
- Level 3 & Level 4: approximately 50%

Remaining units, evidence requirements, and action plans will be reviewed with your assessor.

Final Review

- Level 2: Expected completion by approximately 9 months.
- Level 3 & Level 4: Expected completion by approximately 12 months.

At this stage, all units, observations, assessments, and portfolio evidence should be completed.

Important: SSSC registration or condition dates do not extend or override the required qualification timescales set by SRS Skills SVQ Centre. These dates represent regulatory requirements for registration purposes and do not guarantee additional time to complete the qualification. Learners are expected to work towards the programme timescales agreed at induction.

10. Non-Engagement & Missed Milestones Policy

10.1 Definition

A learner may be considered non-engaging where they:

- fail to attend scheduled sessions without notice
- fail to maintain regular contact with their assessor
- fail to submit agreed work within deadlines
- repeatedly fail to respond to communication
- fail to engage with agreed learning plans or progress milestones

10.2 Intervention Process

Stage 1 – Informal Contact

The assessor will contact the learner to discuss concerns and agree an action plan.

Stage 2 – Formal Warning

A written warning will be issued outlining required improvements and expected timescales.

Stage 3 – Final Warning

A final review meeting may take place involving:

- learner
- assessor
- line manager/mentor (where applicable)
- SVQ Centre Lead
- A final opportunity to re-engage will be provided.

Stage 4 – Withdrawal

Where progress remains insufficient or engagement does not improve, the learner may be formally withdrawn from the programme.

The final decision rests with the SVQ Centre Lead.

10.3 Financial Liability

Withdrawal from the programme for any reason, including non-engagement, does not remove liability for any outstanding programme fees.

Any fees due remain payable in full.

11. Fees, Payments & Financial Responsibility

11.1 Enrolment Fee

An enrolment fee of £100 is payable upon registration.

This fee is non-refundable once registration has been processed and covers:

- onboarding and administration costs
- induction and initial setup activities
- Qualifications Scotland registration fees
- learner registration and programme allocation

Payment of the enrolment fee secures the learner's place on the programme.

11.2 Programme Fee Liability

Attendance at induction or engagement in any assessment-related activity constitutes programme commencement.

This includes:

- induction attendance
- assessor meetings
- portfolio planning
- evidence submission
- observations
- assessment activity

From commencement, learners become liable for the full programme fee regardless of payment status or instalment arrangement.

Instalment plans are a payment method only and do not reduce overall financial liability.

This agreement is legally binding upon commencement of the programme.

12. Cancellation & Refund Policy

All cancellation requests must be submitted in writing to: enquiries@srscore.uk

Requests must include:

- full name
- registration number
- programme title

- reason for cancellation

Acknowledgement will be issued within 7 working days.

12.1 Refund Structure

Within 14 Days of Registration (No Programme Commencement)

Any refundable amount will exclude the non-refundable £100 enrolment and administration fee.

After 14 Days (No Programme Commencement)

Partial refunds may be considered subject to costs incurred.

After Programme Commencement (Including Induction)

- no refund is payable
- full programme fees remain due

Approval of cancellation does not remove liability for any fees already incurred or contractually due.

13. Invoice Payment Reminder & Collections Policy

13.1 Invoices include:

- invoice number
- amount due
- due date
- payment instructions

Invoices are typically issued 7 days before the payment due date.

13.2 Reminder Process

Due Date Reminder

If payment is not received by the due date:

- a reminder email is issued
- a 7-day grace period begins

Overdue Reminder

If payment remains outstanding after 7 days:

- final notice may be issued
- access to SVQ services may be suspended

13.3 Service Suspension

Where payment remains outstanding following the grace period:

- access to SVQ services may be suspended
- learners will be notified in writing

Suspension of services:

- does not cancel enrolment
- does not constitute withdrawal

- does not remove financial liability

Continued non-payment may result in further recovery action being taken.

13.4 Payment Arrangements

Where a payment arrangement or dispute is actively being managed, suspension may be paused pending resolution.

14. Appeals Procedure

Learners may appeal decisions relating to:

- withdrawal
- non-engagement actions
- cancellation decisions
- fee disputes

Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 working days.

Appeals will normally be reviewed within:

- 14 working days (financial matters)
- 15 working days (non-engagement matters)

15. Exceptional Circumstances

SRS Skills may consider fee adjustments or additional support in exceptional circumstances such as:

- serious illness
- bereavement
- significant personal hardship

Supporting evidence may be required.

16. Data Protection & Confidentiality

SRS Skills SVQ Centre complies with UK GDPR.

Learner information is stored securely and used only for:

- qualification delivery
- awarding body requirements
- regulatory compliance
- learner support

17. Professional Standards & Conduct

Learners must act professionally throughout their qualification and workplace practice.

All learners must work in accordance with:

- employer policies and procedures

- SSSC Codes of Practice
- Health and Social Care Standards
- safeguarding and professional boundaries
- confidentiality and data protection legislation

Failure to maintain professional standards may affect progression and may be reported where required.

18. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

SRS Skills SVQ Centre is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment free from discrimination or unfair treatment.

Reasonable adjustments may be considered where appropriate.

19. Reasonable Adjustments / Support

Learners requiring additional support should inform their assessor as early as possible so appropriate arrangements can be considered.

20. Complaints Procedure

If you are dissatisfied, you should raise concerns with your assessor or the SVQ Centre Lead as soon as possible.

Formal complaints may be submitted to: enquiries@srscare.uk

Complaints will be investigated fairly and confidentially.

Acknowledgement will be provided within 5 working days.

21. Useful Resources

Learners may find the following useful:

- Qualifications Scotland (QS)
- SSSC Codes of Practice
- Health and Social Care Standards

22. Review

This handbook will be reviewed annually or earlier if required.

Learners will be notified of any significant changes where applicable.

23. Contact Information

SRS Skills SVQ Centre enquiries@srscare.uk