Starting Your First Care Job

Learner workbook for people preparing for or beginning adult social care work in England.

An introduction to adult social care in England. This learning does not replace employer induction, mandatory training, the Care Certificate, workplace competency assessment or a regulated qualification. It does not authorise independent medicines, moving and handling or clinical tasks.

Use the workbook with the eight online modules. Make a decision before reading guidance. Use fictional examples throughout. Never copy real care records or names here.

Module 1 Understanding Your Role in Care

Module 2 Recruitment, Induction and Your First Shift

Module 3 Communication, Dignity and Choice

Module 4 Care Plans, Consent and Knowing Your Limits

Module 5 Staying Safe During Everyday Care

Module 6 Recognising Changes, Concerns and Safeguarding

Module 7 Records, Handover and Professional Boundaries

Module 8 Looking After Yourself and Building Confidence

Module 1 Understanding Your Role in Care

- Explain how care supports a person's everyday life and independence.
- Distinguish the care worker's role from tasks needing further training or authorisation.
- Describe how to work with colleagues without treating routines as permission.

Your decision

A colleague takes over making a drink although the plan says the person can safely do it with time. What is the best response?

- Finish faster and avoid questioning the colleague.
- Ask the person how they want support and clarify the agreed approach with the colleague.
- Leave the person entirely alone regardless of the plan.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Using a fictional job advert or your own job description, list three duties, two questions about support and one task needing further training. Do not include anyone's care information.

Review

Care supports a life, not just a task list. Ask about preferences, preserve independence and clarify your role before unfamiliar work.

Understanding My Role

Fictional advert: support adults with daily living in a care home, report changes and keep records. Separate training is required for medicines and moving and handling.

Which duties are clear from the advert?

Your response: _____

Which two duties need clarification from the employer?

Your response: _____

What can independence look like when someone needs physical help?

Your response: _____

Write a phrase to use when a task is outside your training.

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

A useful response identifies daily support, reporting and records, asks about assessed practical tasks and names a reliable supervisor. Willingness does not establish competence.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 2 Recruitment, Induction and Your First Shift

- Prepare questions and information for starting a care role.
- Identify first-shift help routes and unresolved safety arrangements.
- Explain why shadowing and workplace assessment are different.

Your decision

Your first homecare rota starts tomorrow, but the duty contact does not work. What should you do?

- Keep the rota and hope no problem occurs.
- Use the person's family as the default duty service.
- Raise the missing support route with the coordinator and agree an effective contact and escalation arrangement.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Complete the First Shift Checklist for a fictional service if you are not employed. Mark unknown details as questions, not completed arrangements. An employed learner can verify contacts with their induction lead.

Review

Prepare, check help routes and record what has actually been learned. A missing arrangement is a question to resolve, not your personal failure.

First Shift Checklist

You are preparing for a fictional first shift. Do not tick an arrangement as confirmed unless you know it. Mark unknown items as questions for the induction contact.

Arrival time, place and named induction contact

Your response: _____

Identification, clothing and required documents

Your response: _____

Current plans and authorised access

Your response: _____

Emergency, safeguarding and out-of-hours help

Your response: _____

Alternative route if the first contact is unavailable

Your response: _____

Tasks requiring supervision or assessment

Your response: _____

Break cover, delays, absence and travel arrangements

Your response: _____

Learning support or reasonable adjustments to discuss

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Before independent work, unresolved safety and support arrangements must be clarified. A completed learning checklist is not workplace sign-off.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Induction Contact Planner

Use role titles or fictional contact labels here. Keep actual workplace contact details in an approved place; do not include private care information.

Routine induction questions: role to contact and how

Your response: _____

Urgent help: route and what to say

Your response: _____

Safeguarding concern: first and alternative routes

Your response: _____

Out-of-hours help and fallback when unavailable

Your response: _____

Absence or rota problem: reporting arrangement

Your response: _____

Training and competence: assessor or supervisor role

Your response: _____

Date and method for checking these arrangements

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

A reliable route includes what happens when the first person does not respond. Verify arrangements with the employer rather than relying on this worksheet.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 3 Communication, Dignity and Choice

- Choose communication that supports the person's understanding and involvement.
- Explain how privacy and dignity apply during personal support.
- Respond appropriately when relatives or assumptions overshadow the person.

Your decision

A relative answers every question, while the person is trying to speak. What is most appropriate?

- Thank the relative and invite the person to respond using their preferred communication support.
- Let the relative decide because they speak more quickly.
- Tell the relative to leave without checking the person's wishes.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Rewrite a fictional introduction and a response to embarrassment. Identify one change to language, one privacy action and one question about the person's preferences.

Review

Speak with the person, allow time and protect privacy. Communication support and family involvement should strengthen their participation.

Respectful Communication and Dignity Guide

Fictional encounter: Jo needs extra time to answer. Their relative answers every question. Jo looks embarrassed when washing is discussed in the shared room.

Write an introduction and ask Jo's preferred name.

Your response: _____

How will you invite Jo's response without dismissing the relative?

Your response: _____

Identify two ways to support communication.

Your response: _____

How will you discuss washing privately and check consent?

Your response: _____

What preference should be clarified rather than assumed?

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Allow time, support the person's voice and move private discussion to an appropriate place. Do not infer incapacity from slow communication or let embarrassment be dismissed.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 4 Care Plans, Consent and Knowing Your Limits

- Find preferences, risks and support instructions in a care plan and identify uncertainty.
- Apply introductory consent and Mental Capacity Act principles to a fictional refusal.
- Explain when a task requires trained support and further assessment.

Your decision

A person refuses a wash. Their relative insists it must happen immediately. What should you do?

- Carry on because the plan contains washing.
- Respect the refusal, explore support or alternatives and seek appropriate guidance if risk or capacity concerns arise.
- Assume refusal proves incapacity and ask the relative to consent.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Use the workbook's fictional care plan. Identify a preference, a risk, missing instructions and a consent question. Write a clarification request. Never upload or copy a real care plan.

Review

Use current plans, support choices and clarify uncertainty. Consent, capacity and competence are related but separate questions.

Reading a Care Plan

FICTIONAL EXTRACT: Alex prefers to dress after breakfast and uses a hearing aid. The plan says “help with transfer” but gives no equipment or assistance details. An older note describes another routine. Today Alex declines washing. This extract is deliberately incomplete and must not be used as a care instruction.

Identify a preference and a communication need.

Your response: _____

Identify information missing for safe support.

Your response: _____

What should be clarified about conflicting notes?

Your response: _____

Does the plan mean Alex has already consented today?

Your response: _____

Write the request for current assessed instructions.

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Check the current plan and obtain the relevant assessed instructions before an unfamiliar transfer. Hear Alex’s current wishes. The extract gives no practical transfer authorisation.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

When to Seek Clarification

Fictional situation: the specified equipment is unavailable, a colleague proposes a substitute and you have not been assessed to use it.

What immediate need remains for the person?

Your response: _____

What have you checked and what is uncertain?

Your response: _____

What support or instruction is needed?

Your response: _____

Write a clear request to the responsible lead.

Your response: _____

What will you do if the first contact cannot help?

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Explain the gap and obtain competent support and a safe arrangement. Do not substitute an unassessed technique or leave the care need unreported.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 5 Staying Safe During Everyday Care

- Recognise common environmental and infection risks during a shift.
- Explain when hand hygiene and appropriate PPE are needed.
- Choose safe escalation for unavailable equipment, emergencies and needs outside training.

Your decision

The agreed equipment is unavailable and a colleague suggests an unassessed manual lift. What is safest?

- Refuse the unsafe substitute and obtain competent support and an assessed safe arrangement.
- Lift together because two workers must be safe.
- Leave without telling anyone.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Review the fictional visit checklist. Identify an environmental hazard, an infection risk and an equipment problem. For each, state what you can do and who must help. Do not practise techniques from this workbook.

Review

Follow assessed arrangements, prevent contamination and obtain trained help. Recognising limits is a safety skill.

Everyday Safety Awareness Guide

Fictional visit: a walkway is obstructed, required PPE is missing and a device has visible damage. The person needs support, but no immediate life-threatening emergency is described.

Separate the three hazards and possible harms.

Your response: _____

What can you safely address with agreement?

Your response: _____

What needs trained advice or equipment support?

Your response: _____

How could contamination transfer between care and food tasks?

Your response: _____

What changes would require urgent escalation?

Your response: _____

Write what to report without diagnosing or improvising.

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Follow local risk assessments, infection arrangements and equipment instructions. Report missing protection and defects. Never use this sheet as a practical technique guide.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 6 Recognising Changes, Concerns and Safeguarding

- Distinguish urgent danger from concerns needing prompt reporting.
- Respond supportively to a disclosure without investigating or promising secrecy.
- Explain factual reporting and alternative escalation routes.

Your decision

A person says money has disappeared and asks you not to tell anyone. What should you do?

- Promise secrecy so they will trust you.
- Search relatives' belongings to find proof.
- Listen, explain the limits of confidentiality and report through the appropriate safeguarding route.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Use the fictional missing-money disclosure. Write the first supportive response and a factual report. Identify an immediate danger route and an alternative contact. Do not use real allegations or care details.

Review

Notice changes, listen, protect immediate safety and report facts. You do not need to investigate before obtaining help.

Recognising and Reporting Concerns

Fictional disclosure: “Money has gone from my purse. Please don’t tell anyone.” You have not witnessed theft. No immediate danger is apparent, but the concern needs attention.

Write a listening response without promising secrecy.

Your response: _____

What are the person’s words, and what have you actually observed?

Your response: _____

What immediate safety questions or actions may be needed?

Your response: _____

Name the reporting role and alternative if implicated.

Your response: _____

Write a factual report and the follow-up question.

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Do not search belongings, confront an alleged person or decide the allegation is proved. Report the disclosure accurately and use appropriate safeguarding support.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 7 Records, Handover and Professional Boundaries

- Write a factual fictional record and identify a safe correction process.
- Give a clear handover including action and outstanding concerns.
- Choose appropriate information sharing and professional boundaries.

Your decision

A colleague asks you to record care as completed although it was not delivered. What should you do?

- Record truthfully, report the unmet need and seek support if pressured.
- Sign because the colleague is more experienced.
- Leave the entry blank and tell nobody.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Rewrite “Mrs X was awkward and did not eat” using the fictional facts on the worksheet. Prepare a short handover with the action already taken and what still needs follow-up. Do not enter real names or records.

Review

Be factual, correct transparently, hand over clearly and share through authorised routes. Professional boundaries support a caring relationship.

Recording and Handover Practice Sheets

FICTIONAL FACTS: at 10:15, Alex declined breakfast and said “I feel sick”. Water was offered under the agreed plan. The shift lead was informed at 10:20 and asked for a review. No review outcome is known yet. Replace the phrase “awkward and would not eat”.

Write an objective entry using the given times, words and action.

Your response: _____

Which statement would be an assumption rather than a fact?

Your response: _____

Give a concise handover including the outstanding review.

Your response: _____

How should a later correction or late entry be identified?

Your response: _____

What should never be signed as completed?

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Record observed events and attributed words, not motives. State that review is outstanding. Follow the employer’s recording policy and preserve the audit trail.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Professional Boundaries Guide

Fictional requests: a person asks for your personal number, offers an expensive gift and asks you to lend money. They are seeking reassurance and help.

Write a warm response using the authorised work contact.

Your response: _____

What should you check about gifts?

Your response: _____

How will you decline a loan and arrange appropriate support?

Your response: _____

Which concerns should be reported and through what role?

Your response: _____

Why does a family relationship not automatically permit sharing records?

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Be kind and explain the appropriate route. Follow gifts and financial policies rather than assuming acceptance is harmless. Maintain confidentiality and professional accountability.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Module 8 Looking After Yourself and Building Confidence

- Prepare a specific request for support after a difficult shift.
- Distinguish constructive feedback from humiliating or discriminatory treatment.
- Plan gradual learning and identify when work conditions or personal health need attention.

Your decision

After missed breaks and a distressing shift, a manager says you need to toughen up. What is constructive?

- Accept that distress means you cannot work in care.
- Describe the safety and support needs, request a workload review and use another route if necessary.
- Leave essential care unsupported without telling anyone.

Your choice and reason: _____

Your practical activity

Complete a fictional first-supervision agenda: one strength, one concern, one support request and one realistic goal. If employed, use only your own non-identifying learning needs. Do not include private care details.

Review

Ask for specific support, report safety concerns and record progress honestly. Caring for others should include support for the worker providing care.

First Supervision Review Planner

You may use a fictional learner who is new to handover and felt distressed after a difficult shift. Use only non-identifying learning needs if employed.

One thing going well and a specific example

Your response: _____

One uncertainty or concern

Your response: _____

A task needing supported practice or assessment

Your response: _____

One workload or wellbeing support request

Your response: _____

Who will help and by when?

Your response: _____

When will progress and support be reviewed?

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

A useful request describes the situation, its effect and the practical support needed. Supervision is not proof of competence for every task.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Personal Development Checklist

Create one realistic learning goal. This is a personal learning plan, not an employer assessment or Care Certificate record.

What will you learn or practise?

Your response: _____

What support or accessible material is needed?

Your response: _____

What can be practised with fictional information?

Your response: _____

Which workplace actions need supervision?

Your response: _____

Who can assess relevant competence?

Your response: _____

What evidence and review date will be agreed?

Your response: _____

What wellbeing support could help you continue safely?

Your response: _____

Learning guidance

Distinguish learning, observation, supported practice and demonstrated competence. Record what remains to be assessed honestly.

This is a learning worksheet, not workplace competency sign-off.

Source register reviewed 7 October 2026

Skills for Care: Care Certificate standards 2025

https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate-standards.aspx

CQC: Regulations for service providers and managers

https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/regulations-service-providers-and-managers

CQC: Regulation 11 consent

https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/regulations-service-providers-and-managers/health-social-care-act/regulation-11

CQC: Regulation 18 staffing

https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/regulations-service-providers-and-managers/health-social-care-act/regulation-18

CQC: Regulation 19 recruitment and competence

https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/regulations-service-providers-and-managers/health-social-care-act/regulation-19

Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice

Care Act statutory guidance Chapter 14

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance

Government: Infection prevention and control in adult social care

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-prevention-and-control-in-adult-social-care-settings/infection-prevention-and-control-resource-for-adult-social-care

HSE: Moving and handling risk management

https://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/moving-handling/manage-the-risk.htm

HSE: Work-related stress

https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/overview.htm

ICO: Data sharing code of practice

https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/data-sharing/data-sharing-a-code-of-practice/

Acas: Raising a problem at work

https://www.acas.org.uk/how-to-raise-a-problem-at-work

Acas: Whistleblowing at work

https://www.acas.org.uk/whistleblowing-at-work