



Department
for Education

Specification for Mandatory Qualifications

**For specialist teachers of children and
young people with hearing impairments**

For courses starting from September 2023

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Introduction

This specification applies to mandatory qualification (MQ) courses starting from September 2023. It has been revised and updated to allow it to remain a high quality qualification that continues to:

- reflect the changing landscape.
- be sufficiently flexible to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the profession and children and young people with sensory impairment.
- align with DfE priorities, to ensure that schools, Higher Education Institutions and others across the sector work collaboratively on the design and delivery of training in an increasingly school-led system.
- raise aspirations for children and young people with vision impairments (VI), hearing impairments (HI) and multi-sensory impairments (MSI).

So that children and young people¹ with sensory impairments receive the best quality education and care, teachers of classes of children and young people who have HI (deafness)², who have vision impairments (VI)³ and who are deafblind⁴ are required⁵ to hold an additional specialist qualification in addition to qualified teacher status (QTS) or qualified teacher learning and skills (QTLS)⁶. This qualification is known as the mandatory qualification for specialist teachers of pupils with hearing impairment, vision impairment or multi-sensory impairment/ deafblind (MQ). It is designed to prepare teachers⁷ to work effectively with children and young people who are deaf, who have VI or who are deafblind.

There are three versions of the qualification: one for teachers of HI learners, one for those teaching learners with VI, and one for those teaching deafblind learners. Teachers

¹ Up to age 25

² Deaf children are defined as all children with sensorineural and permanent conductive deafness, using the descriptors provided by the British Society of Audiology and BATOD. The term 'deaf' includes all levels of deafness, from mild to profound'.

People with hearing impairments may have some functional hearing. Hearing impairment is sometimes referred to as 'deafness' or 'hearing loss'.

³ Vision impairment is sometimes referred to as 'blindness', 'partial sightedness' or 'sight loss'.

⁴ Deafblind people may have some functional sight and/or hearing. Deafblindness is sometimes referred to as 'multi-sensory impairment' (MSI) or 'dual-sensory loss'

⁵ Statutory Instrument 2003 No.1662, the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003.

⁶ Since 1 April 2012, further education teachers who have been awarded QTLS by the Institute for Learning (IfL) and are members of the IfL are recognised as qualified teachers in schools.

⁷ The regulations apply to teachers employed in schools and not specialist peripatetic teachers working with pupils with sensory impairments employed in special educational needs support services. However, the DfE has stated that it is their expectation that such teachers would have the relevant MQ. See text below.

employed to teach classes of children and young people with a sensory impairment who do not already hold an appropriate MQ are required to gain the qualification within their first three years in post.

‘A qualified teacher may be employed to teach a class of pupils who are hearing impaired, visually impaired, or both hearing and visually impaired if the headteacher is satisfied that the person in question is in the process of obtaining the relevant MQ and provided that the aggregate period for which the teacher teaches a class of pupils does not exceed three years.’ [Statutory instrument 2003 No.1662. The Education (School Teachers’ Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003, 9]

Although the requirement to hold an MQ applies only to teachers in specific roles, the appeal of the MQs is much wider. Qualified teachers in support and advisory roles, and those working with children and young people who have HI in home⁸, early years and post-16 settings, are also strongly advised to complete MQ training, in the best interest of the children and young people with whom they work.

*‘Those teaching classes of children with sensory impairment **must** hold an appropriate qualification approved by the Secretary of State. Teachers working in an advisory role to support such pupils should also hold the appropriate qualification.’⁹*

All MQ training programmes must meet the minimum specification set out on pages 10 - 33. However, it is expected that some providers will wish to develop additional criteria so as to tailor MQ courses more closely to the needs of participants and other stakeholders.

To be awarded an MQ, the Department for Education (DfE) requires that participants are assessed against – and demonstrate that they meet – the course outcomes. The academic level at which the qualification is validated is entirely a matter for providers. It should not compromise the purposes or quality of the MQ and should be consistent with the expertise required to carry out the role of a Qualified Teacher of Hearing Impairment.

Providing training leading to the award of an MQ

To deliver a course leading to the award of an MQ, training providers must gain the approval of the Secretary of State. Although the type of provider is not stipulated MQ courses have traditionally been delivered by higher education institutions, working in partnership with others, including local authorities, schools and voluntary bodies.

To become an approved provider of MQ courses, the Department for Education will periodically invite training providers to seek approval and, if they are interested, submit

⁸ From birth

⁹ DfE (September 2014) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years

an application demonstrating how their provision will meet the requirements of the specification and how their course will assist teachers in meeting the course outcomes, including the minimum MQ outcomes.

It is envisaged that successful providers will receive approval from the Secretary of State to deliver courses leading to the award of MQ for an initial period of three years, with the option for this to be extended annually for a further 3 years. Approved MQ provision may be inspected by Ofsted.

The MQ specification

This specification was revised following a review of the previous specification led by the National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) in 2018/19, and subsequent co-production with the sensory impairment sector in 2019/2020, which then reported to DfE. This is to bring the specification up-to-date with recent developments in the teaching of children and young people with sensory impairments. The review contributors included the University providers of the courses, Local Authority sensory impairment services, professional associations and individual specialists in the field, voluntary organisations and parents. The revised specification is set out below (pages 10 - 33).

The specification sets out six overarching criteria. In delivering the qualification MQ course providers must meet each of the criteria.

Criterion 1

MQs should have as their main objective and outcome the raised achievement of children and young people with HI through improving participants' professional knowledge, understanding and skills

Provision should give participants the knowledge, understanding and skills to maximise the opportunities open to children and young people with HI so as to improve their life chances and enable them to fulfil their potential. In this criterion, and throughout the specification, references to the 'achievement' of children and young people should be taken to be broadly defined to include not just academic attainment, but achievement in relation to, for example, physical, mental and emotional well-being; developing confidence and independence; and making a successful transition to adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training, and independent living. The course should also prepare participants to listen to the views of children and young people and to work together with others, including other professionals, parents, carers and families, to protect children and young people, help them to achieve and influence practice.

MQ courses **must** be strongly rooted in practice and providers should make strong links with mainstream settings, special schools and settings, and sensory support services to

help keep provision up to date and relevant to practice. There should be opportunities, in work contexts, for participants to apply, practise and demonstrate what they have learnt.

MQ courses should help prepare participants to work effectively in their current roles (in any phase or context, including in early years and post-16 settings, within mainstream and specialist provision and in support and advisory roles) and must give them opportunities to gain experience of other relevant work contexts, eg through visits, work shadowing and teaching placements.

Criterion 2

MQs should offer high quality training that makes best use of available resources through being tailored to meet participants' training and development needs

The purpose of this criterion is to make the best possible use of the resources available to deliver MQ courses so that they have the maximum impact on participants' practice and the outcomes achieved by the children and young people they teach. Those teaching children and young people with sensory impairments will come from different backgrounds, work in a range of different contexts and have varying knowledge, skills and experience. As a result, participants will have different strengths and training needs in relation to the course outcomes. To ensure that all participants gain maximum benefit from MQ training and that providers make the best use of the resources available to them, provision should be matched as closely as possible to individual needs.

It is important that everyone who joins a course leading to the award of an MQ is able to benefit fully from it. Providers should, therefore, assure themselves that those accepted to join MQ courses have sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills on joining the course to be likely to meet all the course outcomes by the end of the course. Where prospective participants fall below an acceptable entry level in one or more areas, providers should offer them guidance about what they need to do to achieve the required entry level.

Provision should incorporate an initial needs assessment in relation to the course outcomes in order to ensure well-targeted and cost-effective professional development for participants. An initial needs assessment against the course outcomes can help providers to tailor the course to participants' needs. Courses should take full account of participants' prior knowledge and achievement. If a provider is satisfied, at the beginning of an MQ course, that all the participants in the group already meet a particular group of outcomes, then the course need not cover these in great detail, and the time released can be spent looking at other aspects in more detail.

Ultimately, however, all participants must demonstrate that they meet all the course outcomes, and assessors should look for evidence against all the course outcomes throughout the course as an additional check on the accuracy of the needs assessment.

MQ courses cannot cover everything that teachers of children and young people with HI will need to know throughout their careers. As with all professional development, completing an MQ is a stepping-stone. MQ providers have a responsibility to ensure that, at the end of the MQ course, participants are helped to identify areas for further development. This does not mean that the MQ provider has to set specific objectives. Objective setting is done in discussion with line managers in the workplace, as part of the appraisal process. But providers should emphasise the importance of participants setting objectives for further development, eg by building opportunities to set objectives into the end of courses, providing planning tools, discussing further possibilities and opportunities, and giving participants ideas they can consider and discuss with their managers.

Criterion 3

MQs should be delivered flexibly, without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome, to maximise access for participants

This criterion covers aspects of accessibility for all candidates to make it possible for all those needing or wishing to take an MQ to be able to do so.

Providers offering MQ courses should promote equality of opportunity and good relations by meeting the requirements of relevant equality legislation, including the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA), and the Equality Act 2010. For example, they should:

- meet the DDA 'anticipatory duty' by anticipating the needs of disabled candidates/participants and making provision for them
- encourage and support candidates/participants to disclose disabilities so that reasonable adjustments can be made
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- reflect the needs of disabled candidates in promotional and pre-course materials for MQ candidates, and
- comply with relevant duties under equalities legislation to enable all participants to access and participate fully in the course

Since the majority of MQ participants study part-time, provision should be as flexible as possible without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome. DfE is aware that there are limits to the amount of flexibility that one provider can achieve, especially where numbers are very small. However, those offering the MQ courses should make their provision as flexible as possible. Even very small changes can make a considerable difference. For example, providers could publish information about course dates well in advance to enable participants to attend training without missing important events at their workplace. They could also put key content from taught sessions online so

that participants who miss sessions unavoidably are able to catch up, or advertise any crèche provision that might be available.

Criterion 4

MQs should be informed by the needs of stakeholders and involve them in development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the provision

Stakeholders might include teachers, schools/other settings, employers, local authorities, parents/carers, children and young people, and others such as the relevant SEND associations and groups of disabled people, as well as current and former participants on MQ courses.

Providers of MQ training must collect and take account of evidence about the needs of stakeholders. This does not mean that stakeholders can determine the content of MQ courses. That is largely dictated by the MQ outcomes and the identified needs of participants. However, providers should be clear about what stakeholders feel is important and, wherever possible, should allow this to influence course content.

MQ course providers should also involve stakeholders, directly or indirectly, in their provision, e.g. as guest speakers, as hosts for visiting participants, as tutors or mentors for participants in the workplace, as moderators or assessors, or by giving evidence about the impact of MQ courses.

Criterion 5

MQs should be of a consistently high quality and subject to rigorous quality assurance procedures, and be supported by mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and improving the impact of provision on teachers' competence and the achievement of children and young people with HI

MQ course providers should subject all aspects of provision to rigorous quality assurance, including:

- recruitment and selection
- needs assessment and setting objectives
- course content, including workplace-based elements
- assessment against the course outcomes, and
- evaluation

They should have good sources of evidence, and mechanisms for ensuring that information gleaned will be applied to future planning and development of the content and delivery of provision.

The main purpose of MQ provision must be to raise participants' competence and the achievement of children and young people with HI. The DfE recognises that it may be difficult to gather evidence on the impact of MQ provision on the achievement of children and young people over the short time that the course runs. Providers should, however, take every opportunity to gather such evidence. They could, for example, encourage participants carrying out assignments to take baseline measures before interventions, and to measure the impact on the achievement of learners with HI following those interventions and over time.

It is essential that candidates are suitable for work with children and young people. As part of their recruitment and selection procedures, providers should assure themselves that those accepted onto MQ courses have had the appropriate background checks to allow them to work with children and young people.¹⁰ The majority of MQ candidates are likely to be employed in posts where they are already working with children and young people at the time of taking the course and, as such, are likely to have undergone the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure check. However, if a candidate with QTS or QTLS has not worked in a school or FE college in a post that involves regular contact with children or young people within the past three months, it will be necessary for a DBS enhanced disclosure to be obtained.

Criterion 6

MQs should have, as a minimum requirement for successful completion, the outcomes set out in Annex A of the MQ specification, so that those holding the qualification(s) make maximum impact on practice

Providers will ensure that the MQ is awarded only to candidates who have shown that their knowledge, understanding and skills match the outcomes in Annex A of the specification. These are minimum requirements. Providers may wish to include other outcomes.

¹⁰ As stipulated by The School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2006, School Staffing (England) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations 2006, and Further Education (Providers of Education) (England) Regulations 2006.

Specification for courses leading to the mandatory qualification for teachers of children and young people with HI

The national specification is set out below. It has, at its heart, three purposes.

These are that mandatory qualifications should:

- be of a consistently high quality
- have an impact on raising the achievement and improving the well-being of children and young people, and
- be easily accessible to those wishing to take them

Mandatory qualifications should:

1. Have as their main objective and outcome the raised achievement of children and young people with HI, through improving participants' professional knowledge, understanding and skills.

MQ courses will demonstrate that provision will:

- 1.1 Have a clear focus in course aims, objectives, content and assessment on raising the achievement of children and young people with HI to close the attainment gap and improve their well-being by working from their aspirations to determine wider outcomes.
- 1.2 Make strong links to effective practice in schools, homes and other settings.
- 1.3 Require participants to apply, practise and demonstrate what they have learnt in a range of appropriate work contexts.
- 1.4 Be evidence-based, reflecting recent research and inspection evidence and important developments and innovations relating to vision impairment, including current specialist equipment.
- 1.5 Develop participants' understanding of current legislation and government policies and initiatives in relation to sensory impairment, and the implications of these for children and young people with HI and the settings in which they are cared for and/or educated.
- 1.6 Develop participants' skills in consulting children and young people with HI about issues that affect them individually and collectively and helping them express their views to others.

- 1.7 Develop participants' skills in advising, supporting, coaching and collaborating with colleagues and families. Working in partnership with multi-agency teams to meet the needs of children and young people with HI, and their families.
- 1.8 Provide specialist support, as appropriate, for participants teaching children and young people with HI in any phase or context, including in home, early years and post-16 settings, within mainstream and specialist provision including those in support and advisory roles.
- 1.9 Equip participants with the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to apply what they have learned more widely, i.e. in different phases or contexts.
- 1.10 Enable participants to make an impact on practice by meeting the course outcomes
- 1.11 Involve rigorous assessment of participants against all of the course outcomes.

2. MQs should offer high quality training that makes best use of available resources through being tailored to meet participants' training and development needs.

MQ courses will demonstrate that:

- 2.1 Arrangements are in place to recognise that participants will have a range of levels of knowledge and experience
- 2.2 Provision, including visits and teaching placements, is of high quality, cost-effective, tailored to individuals' circumstances and their training and development needs and offers specialist supervision to provide optimal support
- 2.3 Arrangements are in place for those achieving the MQ to be helped to consider further professional objectives and identify further opportunities

3. Be delivered flexibly, without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome, to maximise access for participants.

MQ courses will demonstrate that provision will be accessible and flexible, without compromising appropriate progression and quality of outcome, through:

- 3.1 Complying with relevant duties under equalities legislation to enable all participants to access and participate fully in the course, eg making reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates/participants

3.2 Flexible course delivery , for example, opportunities for participants to be taught in different modes, eg direct face to face teaching, blended or e-learning, full-time and part-time

3.3 Using ICT effectively in teaching and learning, and to facilitate effective communication, eg to facilitate:

- communication between providers and link schools, settings and services
- direct tutor support for participants, eg telephone calls, e-mail, forums, videoconferencing, web chat, and
- communication and collaborative learning between participants, eg through email, forums or online work groups

4. Be informed by the needs of stakeholders and involve them in development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the provision.

MQ courses will demonstrate:

4.1 Clear evidence that provision has been developed in consultation with stakeholders and that they will be involved, directly or indirectly, in evaluation

5. Be of a consistently high quality and subject to rigorous quality assurance procedures, and supported by mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and improving the impact of provision on participants' competence and the achievement of children and young people with HI.

MQ courses should demonstrate:

5.1 The range of internal and external evaluation measures available, including quality assurance of teaching placements, and how the evidence gathered will be used to improve the quality and impact of provision

5.2 That systems are in place to ensure that participants recruited onto the course have up to date DBS check as well as sufficient prior knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to benefit from the course, and to meet the course outcomes by the end of the course.

5.3 Have quality assurance measures in place to guarantee that the course is delivered by those with appropriate experience, up to date specialist knowledge and skills and ensures that those involved in delivery and assessment, including on teaching placements, understand their roles and responsibilities and carry them out to a high standard.

5.4 That participants have access to a range of appropriate high-quality teaching placements including peripatetic services and special schools.

- 5.5 That there are sufficient, up to date, specialist teaching resources available that are relevant to training teachers of children and young people with HI, to enable all participants to reach the course outcomes.
- 5.6 That means are in place to ensure that assessment judgements across provision are consistent, reliable and accurate and that these will be moderated.
- 5.7 Specific evidence and explanation of the methods and measures to be used for evaluating the quality, standards and impact of provision on participants' competence and confidence and, where appropriate, the achievement of children and young people with HI for e.g. by requiring participants to evaluate improvements in pupils' achievement as a result of particular aspects of their practice.

6. Have, as a minimum requirement for successful completion, the mandatory qualification outcomes (Annex A) so that those holding the qualification(s) make maximum impact on practice.

Annex A – Minimum mandatory qualifications outcomes

Introduction

The mandatory qualifications (MQs) for qualified teachers of Sensory Impairments (QTSIs) include the qualifications for teachers of learners with hearing impairment/deafness (HI), or multi-sensory impairment/ deafblindness (MSI), or vision impairment (VI). These MQs demand high expectations of both course providers and qualifying teachers. Central to the role of the QTSIs is enabling learners with SI to have equal access to education and to have opportunities to develop their independence and personal agency.

The in-depth knowledge base and specialist skills required are extensive and incorporate all aspects of the sensory impaired learner's development across education and family contexts, from 0 to 25 yrs. The courses recognise that a sensory impairment is ever present and has an impact on every aspect of life.

Supporting families is crucial to the role of a QTSI and families need specific information about sensory impairment in order to be able to make informed choices about approaches to learning.

The QTSI qualifications covers the roles of specialist teachers in special schools, resource bases and as visiting teachers in all provision, including preschool. Therefore, the course content provides the grounding for those wishing to practise in any of these settings.

Because of the level of expertise and knowledge required the course equips the QTSIs to become a critical and reflective practitioner who will be able to pursue personal career development and improve practice through research and self-reflection.

Learners with VI, MSI/deafblindness or HI/deafness may also have an additional special educational need or disability. These standards will equip the QTSI to work together with other professionals as required.

Whilst being part of an overall category of sensory impairment (SI) the three courses recognise the essential differences between HI, MSI/deafblind and VI learning and the children and young people they represent, which are reflected in current legislation.

Generic Standards

There are a number of key knowledge and skills that are common across the three different SI qualifications. These are outlined below before we outline the specific knowledge and skills relevant to QToD.

Standard 1: The current legislative and educational framework

Specialist teachers must have detailed knowledge and understanding of current educational legislation and practice and recognise that this will change over time (both in terms of legal frameworks and guidance/codes of practice at national and local levels). QTSIs, as determined by their specialism, must be able to apply this knowledge and understanding when working with learners with sensory impairment 0-25 years, in a range of educational contexts, and working with other professionals and families.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>1K1a Understand national legislation and the range of policies/guidelines that inform provision for learners with SI and which defines their entitlements.</p> <p>1K1b Have an overview of the differences in policy and process in different parts of the UK.</p> <p>1K1c Have an understanding of the specific terminology around education, health and care of children and young people SEN and disability-specific terminology related to SI.</p>	<p>1S1a To source and critically evaluate and implement legislative guidance and policy with respect to the role of an SI specialist teacher (UK wide and locally).</p> <p>1S1b To work with professionals to determine the implication of legislation and guidance for local policy and practice including support for those with and without Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)</p> <p>1S1c To support families in their understanding of the national legislation and guidance which relates to their child.</p>
<p>1K2 Understand current statutory and non-statutory curriculum frameworks and their associated assessment criteria (e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage, National Curriculum, and education and training for learners from 18 to 25).</p>	<p>1S2 To be able to work with all education providers to facilitate the delivery of the appropriate curriculum for SI learners in their settings.</p>
<p>1K3 Understand safeguarding policy and practice and understand the specific vulnerabilities of learners with SI.</p>	<p>1S3 To advise on and support the implementation and execution of safeguarding procedures.</p>

<p>1K4 Understand early identification of sensory impairment protocols, including the role of the specialist teacher in all settings.</p>	<p>1S4a To work with parents/carers and other professionals to implement early identification protocols.</p> <p>1S4b To support parents/carers in making an informed choice on appropriate provision for their child or young person and be able to signpost them to other resources.</p>
<p>1K5 Understand school/setting self-evaluation and improvement processes, including the mechanisms for setting priorities, objectives and targets and translating these into policies and strategies.</p>	<p>1S5 To work with schools to evaluate and adapt their provision for learners with SI to optimise SI learners' engagement, inclusion and attainment in line with national guidelines for education including those of external evaluation bodies such as Ofsted.</p>

Standard 2: Personal professional development

The QTSIs are key role models who can influence the attitudes, values and behaviours of learners with sensory impairment as well as others involved in their education and development. Holding high expectations of all learners with sensory impairment and communicating these expectations to stakeholders to effect positive change, are important professional qualities which are central to the work of a specialist teacher. These qualities are evident in the professional identity and behaviours of specialist teachers. Given the heterogeneous nature of the learners with SI and the complex and varied educational contexts in which they are situated, specialist SI teachers must be practitioner-researchers who, in collaboration with key stakeholders, are able to design and critically evaluate educational interventions.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
2K1 Understand the role of a reflective and critical teacher in supporting all aspects of a learner's development.	<p>2S1a To be critical and reflective (e.g. through observation, analysis, and evaluation).</p> <p>2S1b To have the confidence and skills to ensure that recommendations are implemented so SI learners can achieve their potential.</p>
2K2 Understand the importance of an evidence-based understanding of current thinking, research and practice within SI and general education.	<p>2S2a To access and critically evaluate evidence-based research and professional publications.</p> <p>2S2b To continually reflect on and develop skills to support SI children and their families.</p> <p>2S2c To plan and maintain ongoing (and post-qualification) professional development including changes to legislation and policy as well as in other areas pertinent to the SI sector.</p>
2K3 Understand that their own perspectives and cultural understanding will influence their work with learners and their families.	<p>2S3a To take account of cultural, linguistic and family differences when working with all families and their children</p> <p>2S3b To monitor own emotional resilience and know where to go for support.</p>

	2S3c To establish respectful and constructive relationships with children and young people with SI and their families.
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Standard 3: Working in partnership with families

A fundamental part of the QTSI's professional role is working in partnership with learners with sensory impairment, their families, and colleagues in education, health and social care. The key aim of these partnerships is to improve the educational outcomes, social and emotional development and well-being of the learner with sensory impairment. QTSIs must show knowledge and understanding of a wide range of roles undertaken by fellow professionals working across education, health and social care, signposting to other services where appropriate. They must show skill and sensitivity in communicating with families and other professionals to ensure a shared understanding and consistency of approach in supporting learners with sensory impairment and promoting their independence.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
3K1 Understand the potential impact of the diagnosis of SI upon the family.	3S1a To provide effective, timely and sensitive support to families. 3S1b To work in partnership with families to understand and implement effective strategies to communicate with their child.
3K2 Understand the importance of early intervention.	3S2a To work in partnership with families to understand and implement strategies to support the development of their child. 3S2b To work in partnership with families to adjust to family life with their child. 3S2c To work in partnership with families to understand and navigate the systems and transitions they engage with to support their child.
3K3a Understand the range of education, training and employment opportunities available to SI learners, as well as the support available to them as they leave school. 3K3b Have up to date knowledge of services and supporting organisations available for families at both a local and	3S3 To work with families in making an informed choice on appropriate provision for their child or young person.

national level. Including local charities, national professional bodies.	
3K4 Understand the key elements of successful transition through stages and school settings.	3S4 To work in partnership with the SI learner, parents/carers to ensure informed and effective transitions across different settings.
3K5 Understand the key principles of effective partnership working to achieve optimal outcomes for SI learners.	3S5a To establish a professional relationship that can meet the needs of the SI learner and family recognising that this may change as the learner grows and include representatives from the voluntary sector. 3S5b To establish a team approach that includes clear roles and responsibilities, communication pathways and a means of evaluating the team's effectiveness.
3K6 Understand the key roles and expertise of the range of specialists supporting the SI learner and family.	3S6a To be able to locate and work closely with a range of different professionals to optimise a SI learner's engagement, inclusion and attainment.

QToD specific standards – Introduction

The term deaf learner is used throughout the document to refer to all deaf individuals between the ages of 0 and 25 years.

It is recognised that deafness is ever present and shapes every aspect of life. The following competencies have been written to address and identify the competencies required as a QToD to work with parents/carers and professionals to prepare deaf learners for life as a deaf adult.

Standard 4: Communication and language development

QToDs must understand the importance of language(s) development to facilitate cognitive and social development, and to support wellbeing and mental health. Early family-centred intervention is essential and must be combined with continued specialist support throughout a deaf learner’s education to develop the technical and sophisticated language skills required in adult life. QToDs must understand the importance of the development of language(s), both spoken and signed, as a key component of cultural identity.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
4K1 Up-to-date, evidence-based knowledge of the language(s) acquisition of a deaf learner is essential to inform all practice.	4S1 To critically read and evaluate research and reports relating to language(s) acquisition of deaf learners.
4K2 Deafness may impact on the development of communication and language skills.	4S2 Facilitate the development of communication skills between a deaf learner and others (parent/carers, family/peers and other key adults).
4K3 Successful communication is essential for language development.	As 4S2
4K4 Language acquisition requires access to fluent language(s) from birth and meaningful opportunities to use the language(s) in a wide range of contexts.	4S4 Evaluate and understand the contexts in which a deaf learner is developing language (home, school, social activities).
4K5 Language development typically follows recognisable (but overlapping) hierarchical stages.	4S5 Facilitate the language(s) acquisition of deaf learners in a wide range of contexts supporting the development of both receptive and expressive language skills including pragmatics.

4K6 Language acquisition is complex and influenced by internal and external factors.	4S6 Work in partnership with parents/carers and other adults to facilitate and optimise language acquisition in different contexts for a deaf learner.
4K7 Understand the structure and characteristics of British Sign Language and its key role in the Deaf community and Deaf culture in the UK.	4S7a Have a minimum of a Level 1 accredited BSL qualification with plans to complete Level 2 within 3 years. 4S7b If working with a child who predominantly uses BSL higher level BSL skills/qualifications will be required (of at least level 3 BSL).
4K8 A deaf child may be exposed to, and benefit from, developing multiple languages (spoken and signed).	4S8a Evaluate and understand the different linguistic and communicative needs of a deaf learner (home / community, spoken / signed languages). 4S8b Facilitate and support the different language(s) development needs of the deaf child.
4K9 A deaf learner's language and communication needs may differ in different contexts.	4S9 Evaluate and understand the different linguistic and communicative needs of a deaf learner in different contexts.
4K10 Understand the range of different communication strategies available and how they may be used to support a deaf learner's communication and language development (e.g. Cued Speech, sign supported English, signed English).	4S10 Support the deaf learner to understand their communication and linguistic needs in different contexts and how to ensure those needs are met (acoustic environment, interpreter, assistive technologies, communication support, etc).
4K11 Interaction with peers is an important context for language acquisition.	4S11a Facilitate communication and interaction between a deaf learner and their peers. 4S11b work in partnership with teachers/parents/carers and other key adults as to how to facilitate communication and interaction between a deaf learner and his/her peers.
4K12 Language continues to develop from birth throughout a child's educational years.	4S12a Support and evaluate the different stages of language development required to facilitate learning in different educational contexts.

	<p>4S12b Work in partnership with teachers/parents/carers and other key adults as to how to facilitate language skills required for optimising educational outcomes.</p> <p>4S12c to work in partnership with a deaf learner to develop a clear of their own language needs and development.</p>
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Standard 5: Audiological Management

The MQ ensures that QToDs have the appropriate knowledge to work in partnership with parents, other professionals and deaf learners to develop a clear understanding of the nature of deafness, assessment and good listening conditions. QToDs must have the practical skills effectively to manage and work with others to manage all hearing technologies including psychoacoustic and electroacoustic checks and functional assessment of hearing. QToDs should work in partnership with parents and carers to provide a wide range of evidence-based information for families and to develop independent audiological skills for deaf learners.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
5K1 The process of hearing stems both from the anatomy and physiology of the ear and auditory information being processed by the brain.	5S1a To explain to a range of audiences the anatomy and physiology of the ear/central auditory pathways. 5S1b To accurately interpret audiometric information competently and consider how this impacts on speech and language development.
5K2 The aetiology of deafness and the impact this may have on the nature of deafness.	5S2 To explain to a range of audiences the potential impact of the aetiology of a child's deafness.
5K3a Understanding how auditory perception develops in deaf learners and how this relates to the different forms of audiological assessment. 5K3b There are strengths and limitations of the different forms of objective and subjective audiological assessment.	5S3a To work with families and professionals to maximise auditory processing for deaf learners. 5S3b To explain to a range of audiences the process and outcomes of audiological assessment.
5K4 The physics of sound and how the acoustics of a room impact on auditory perception.	5S4a To undertake assessment of acoustic environments and provide recommendations for optimal listening conditions 5S4b To support and develop deaf learners' awareness of their acoustic environment and how it impacts on their use of their technology.
5K5 How listening skills develop and the impact of different environments on the development of those skills.	5S5a To undertake assessment of functional hearing and amplification.

	<p>5S5b To facilitate and support the development of listening skills in a range of different environments.</p>
<p>5K6 There is a range of audiological equipment and assistive listening devices and learn how to use them effectively and safely in different acoustic environments.</p>	<p>5S6a To carry out day-to-day maintenance of audiological and assistive listening technology.</p> <p>5S6b To evaluate the effectiveness of the baby / child / young person's functional use of audiological technologies.</p> <p>5S6c To facilitate the deaf learner's independent management of their audiological technologies.</p> <p>5S6d To work with parents, professionals and others effectively to use and manage the audiological technologies.</p>

Standard 6: Cognition Development and Learning Needs

QToDs must understand the impact of deafness on cognition and the role that language plays in the development of cognitive functions (i.e. memory, executive functions, Theory of Mind). They must be skilled in working in partnership with parents/carers and professionals to foster and optimise the language, learning and acoustic environments that impact on the cognitive functions of deaf learners. QToDs must understand that deafness can coexist with other disabilities and understand their possible impact on cognition.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
6K1 Deafness can impact on a range of cognitive functions including memory, executive functioning, world knowledge and Theory of Mind.	6S1 To research and evaluate current thinking and evidence-based innovative practices continually to develop an understanding of current evidence and thinking.
6K2 Cognitive functions are supported and developed by exposure to language.	6S2 To provide and facilitate provision of a wide range of opportunities for language acquisition and to support the development of cognitive functions.
6K3 Cognitive functions are supported by a wide range of life experiences and incidental learning.	6S3a To evaluate the nature and extent of deaf learners' experiences and incidental learning. 6S3b Provide and facilitate provision of a wide range of experiences to support the development of cognitive functions. 6S3c To be attuned to the deaf learner's needs, responding appropriately to opportunities to foster development of cognitive functions as they appear in natural situations.
6K4 A deaf learner needs increased concentration to access and process acoustic information, and the associated impact on cognitive function.	6S4a Ensure that listening and the language and learning environment optimises deaf learners' engagement and attention. 6S4b Work in partnership with parents/carer and other professionals to manage listening and the language and

	learning environment to optimise deaf learners' engagement and attention.
6K5 deafness can co-exist with other disabilities which will impact upon cognition e.g. autism, Down syndrome.	6S5a Work in partnership with the specialist contributions of other professionals to ensure the development of the collective knowledge which optimises outcomes for the deaf learner. 6S5b Actively refer families for appropriate support.

Standard 7: Social development and emotional development of deaf children

QToDs must understand the wide-ranging implications of deafness for learners, their identity and their long-term emotional resilience. QToDs must understand the impact of language and the social use of language on the social and emotional development of deaf learners and be able to facilitate this development. They must be skilled at facilitating learning environments where deaf learners are able to thrive and know a range of interventions to support their social and emotional development and well-being. QToDs must be able to identify risk factors for social and emotional development among deaf learners of different needs and ages.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>7K1a There is a range of factors that influence the social and emotional development of ALL learners through up-to-date, evidence-based knowledge.</p> <p>7K1b There are additional and overlapping factors that influence the diverse social and emotional development of deaf learners through up-to-date, evidence-based knowledge.</p>	<p>7S1a Critically read and evaluate research and reports relating to the range of factors that influence the social and emotional development of ALL learners.</p> <p>7S1b Critically read and evaluate research and reports relating to the additional and overlapping diverse social and emotional functioning of deaf learners.</p>
<p>7K2 The development of a deaf learner's growing sense of self and their deafness will impact on their sense of identity.</p>	<p>7S2a Assess and monitor the social and emotional wellbeing of deaf learners.</p> <p>7S2b Work in partnership with parents/carers and professionals to facilitate deaf learners' social engagement with other deaf children and adults to develop their sense of identity.</p>
<p>7K3 Language development is essential for the social and emotional development of deaf learners.</p>	<p>7S3 Evaluate how deaf learners' language development and experiences impact on their social and emotional development and attachment.</p>
<p>7K4 Development of social use of language (e.g. pragmatic skills) is essential for the development of social skills of deaf learners.</p>	<p>7S4 To work with parents/carers and professionals to facilitate the development of a deaf learner's social use of language.</p>

<p>7K5 A supportive home environment is essential for the development for attachment, social skills and emotional development and wellbeing.</p>	<p>7S5 Work with parents/carers and others to facilitate the development of social and emotional skills of deaf learner.</p>
<p>7K6a Deaf children’s language environments are diverse, complex and unique and can have a direct effect on their social skills and emotional development.</p> <p>7K6b Establishing good social relations is important for the development of social skills, quality of life, well-being and good mental health.</p>	<p>7S6 Work with parents/carers and others to develop the effective communicative relationships between deaf learners, their peers and adults within the different communities in which they engage.</p>
<p>7K7 Emotion identification and regulation are important attributes in avoiding mental health problems for deaf learners.</p>	<p>7S7a Evaluate the protective factors (individual’s characteristics, parents, friendships and social environments) that can help minimise the risk of social and emotional difficulties.</p> <p>7S7b Support deaf learners to learn how to evaluate what they feel and discuss their emotions in a safe environment.</p>
<p>7K8 Emotional competence can affect social functioning of deaf children and young people.</p>	<p>7S8 Work with parents / carers and others to develop strategies to support deaf learners’ emotional regulation.</p>
<p>7K9 The development of strong social and emotional skills is key to the development of confidence and independence and to a successful transition to adulthood.</p>	<p>7S9a Encourage deaf learners to be resilient and to persevere with their learning when difficulties arise.</p> <p>7S9b Provide opportunities for deaf learners to develop self-advocacy skills.</p> <p>7S9c Work with the deaf learner, parents/carers, and professionals to facilitate successful transition to adulthood.</p>

Standard 8: Inclusive classroom practices and pedagogies

The QToD must work with, and train, parents/carers and professionals using evidenced-based strategies to facilitate the successful inclusion of deaf learners in educational settings, 0-25 years. The QToD must ensure that pedagogical approaches, strategies and resources (people and material) are utilised effectively to facilitate optimal engagement, inclusion and attainment based on current assessment and evaluation of the individual in the specific setting. The QToD must recognise that different contexts (classrooms, curriculum areas) in a school setting may require different approaches. All strategies and interventions must embrace high expectations.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>8K1a A deaf learner will have different communication and language needs in different learning environments and across different school settings.</p> <p>8K1b There is a range of communication strategies (language, audiological, environmental management, etc.) to support effective communication in different learning environments (home, classroom, playground, hall etc.) through up to date knowledge and an evidence base.</p>	<p>8S1a To employ and evaluate a range of strategies to support effective communication in different educational environments.</p> <p>8S1b To work with, and train, parents/carers and professionals to adopt and evaluate, effective communication strategies.</p>
<p>8K2a There is a wide range of teaching strategies and pedagogies available to deliver the curriculum.</p> <p>8K2b There is a range of different teaching strategies and resources to provide an inclusive learning environment for deaf learners and their peers through up to date knowledge and an evidence base.</p>	<p>8S2a Employ and evaluate a range of different teaching strategies and resources (people and materials) to provide an inclusive learning environment for deaf learners and their peers.</p> <p>8S2b To work with, and train, parents/carers and professionals to adopt and evaluate pedagogies that facilitate effective inclusive practices and optimise engagement for deaf CYP and their peers.</p>

<p>8K3a There are different support strategies for the development of learning skills and outcomes for a deaf learner through up to date knowledge and an evidence base.</p> <p>8K3b There are support strategies for both skill and knowledge development of a deaf learner through up to date knowledge and an evidence base.</p>	<p>8S3a To employ and evaluate the impact of support strategies for skill development, knowledge acquisition and independence/autonomy of a deaf pupil.</p> <p>8S3b To work with, and train, parents/carers and professionals to employ and evaluate the impact of support for both skill and knowledge development.</p>
<p>8K4 Deafness has a potential impact on a deaf learner with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class-based learning • all other school-based activities <p>to ensure optimal engagement, inclusion and attainment for deaf learners and their peers through up to date knowledge and evidence base.</p>	<p>8S4a To employ and evaluate the knowledge and evidence to plan, execute and evaluate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class-based learning • all other school-based activities <p>to ensure optimal engagement, inclusion and attainment for deaf learners and their peers.</p> <p>8S4b To work with, and train, parents/carers and professionals to employ and evaluate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class-based learning • all other school-based activities <p>to optimise engagement, inclusion and attainment for deaf learners and their peers.</p>
<p>8K5a Deafness has a potential impact on a learner’s literacy and numeracy development.</p> <p>8K5b There is a range of evidence-based strategies and resources to optimise literacy and numeracy development for deaf learners through up to date knowledge.</p>	<p>8S5a To use differentiated teaching strategies to optimise literacy and numeracy skills development.</p> <p>8S5b To work with, and train, parents/carers and professionals to use differentiated teaching strategies to optimise literacy and numeracy skills development for deaf children.</p>

Standard 9: Specialist Assessment

QToDs must be skilled in the ethical, ongoing ecological assessment of the development of deaf learners (0-25 years). Assessment may be undertaken by the QToD or in collaboration with parents/carers and other professionals. The QToD must interpret and effectively communicate assessment findings to ensure that appropriate individualised technologies, resources and strategies are in place to optimise deaf learners' engagement, inclusion and attainment. Assessments must inform target setting and be used to monitor the efficacy of current provision and inform decision making. The QToD must ensure that all assessments are accessible to and appropriate for the deaf learner including the use of examination access arrangements to ensure that their achievement is commensurate with their underlying ability.

Knowledge and understanding ('learn that...')	Skills ('learn how...')
<p>9K1a Understanding of the ethics and purpose of assessment.</p> <p>9K1b There is a range of formal and informal procedures, including those specifically designed for deaf learners, which can be used to assess and monitor their progress.</p>	<p>9S1a To select, deliver and interpret appropriate means of specialist assessment for individual children and young people who are deaf in accordance with ethical considerations.</p> <p>9S1b To assess competently and monitor the progress of deaf learners.</p> <p>9S1c To use the outcomes of assessment to inform planning and personalised targets.</p> <p>9S1d To report and explain the results of assessments to a range of audiences via face to face communication and/or specialist written reports.</p> <p>9S1e To use assessment information to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of specialist resources and interventions and inform decision making e.g. type of interventions, educational placement, support allocations.</p>

9K2 Understand that assessment should be multidisciplinary and holistic for deaf learners.	9S2 Work in partnership with parents/carers and professionals as part of multi-disciplinary assessment of deaf learners.
9K3 There is a range of formal national testing and examinations and corresponding access arrangements applicable to different learners.	9S3 To work with parents/carers and professionals to make timely and appropriate recommendations for individualised access arrangements for deaf learners in anticipation of national testing and examinations.
9K4 Deaf learners who have additional needs may require different means of assessment or require existing means of assessment to be adapted.	9S4 To work collaboratively with parents and professionals, to select and or adapt types of assessment for deaf learners with additional needs.



Department
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