



# Recognition of Prior Informal Learning (RPL)

## **Profiling Tool**

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# Introduction to the RPL Profiling tool

The SVQ Mandatory/Core units to which the profiling tool relates are:

- Unit HSC31 Promote effective communication for and about individuals
- Unit HSC32 Promote monitor and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment.
- Unit HSC33 Reflect on and develop your practice
- Unit HSC34 Promote the well-being and protection of children and young people
- Unit HSC35 Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals

This profiling tool will help you to think about the types of life and work experiences you have had in relation to the elements of these units.

The types of experiences that may have helped you develop these skills might be:

- a particular event, task, project you carried out as part of your work role or within your home life or within your community
- the experience of carrying out a particular role for a period of time ie your daily practice
- participation in a training event, or 'on-the-job' training
- being supervised and mentored
- supporting, mentoring or training others.

## How to use the Profiling Tool

1. Look at the first column in the profiling tool: **Examples of life experiences**. Ask yourself whether you have had these or similar experiences. Provide a specific illustration of each experience which is relevant to you ie a particular event, task or situation.
2. Look at the **Learning and skills gained** column. Think about whether these are the types of skills/knowledge that you learned, or developed further, through this experience and add further examples of what you learned.
3. The next column asks you to think about the **application of this learning to your current practice**. It is likely that you have applied and further developed the skills and knowledge that you have gained through your life experiences within your social services role.
4. The next column indicates the **mandatory/core units** to which this learning could relate.
5. The next stage of the profiling process is to provide **reflective evidence** of your learning through experience. First all complete **Reflective Exercise 1** in relation to one of your life experiences. Now complete **Reflective Exercise 2** in relation to a recent experience in work which demonstrates the way in which you have applied and further developed these skills within your current social services practice.

These two exercises will be discussed with your mentor in the professional discussion. You will then produce a reflective account as reflective evidence for the SVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care.

6. In discussion with your mentor you will think about what **action** you need to take in order:

- to gain further experience in your care role
- to gather or produce the evidence you have identified.

You may need to do further learning and development in particular areas. If so, you will discuss with your mentor the ways in which you can do this.

You may consider that you are ready to gain credit for your prior informal learning through SVQ assessment. If so, your Mentor will arrange for you to have an assessment planning meeting with an Assessor. In order to gain credit for the SVQ, your evidence will be assessed in relation to relevant units or elements of the units.

You can write up your reflective account on the **SQA Evidence Gathering Form**.

Worked examples of all the forms highlighted above are provided in this **Profiling Tool**.

The profiling tool aims to prepare you for the process of recognition by helping you make connections between the life experience you have gained; what you have learned from this experience; the ways in which you have applied this learning to your current work practice and can provide reflective evidence of this; and the ways in which you can plan to build on this learning through your care role to meet your particular goals.

### **Example**

1. In the following example the learner has first of all looked at the Profiling Tool and she has identified working in a pub as an experience that she has had.
2. She has looked across at the example of learning and skills gained from experience and agreed that she has some of these skills too.
3. This learner has now thought of a situation at work (or possibly a few situations at work) where she used some learning from this earlier experience of working in a pub. In this example the learner has thought of working on a busy Friday night. One customer had become frustrated and she had managed to defuse his anger. She then thought about how she had used similar skills in her current role while out shopping with two service users.
4. The learner now completed the reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1- working in a busy pub).
5. She then undertook the reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2- shopping trip with service users).
6. In a professional discussion with her mentor she went over these exercises and made the links between her prior learning and her current practice. They decided

that she should produce additional reflective commentary to show how her practice contributed towards the National Care Standards.

7. The final stage was to complete a reflective account on the SQA Evidence Gathering Form (see example).

This example is worked through using the three forms (Reflective Exercise 1, Reflective Exercise 2, SQA Evidence Gathering Form) in order to show the depth of reflective thinking as it developed through this RPL process. In practice, one learner might go straight to the Evidence Gathering Form while another learner may need to work through the different stages in order to make the links between learning from prior experience and learning from current practice and to achieve the necessary depth of reflective thought and analysis.

**Profiling Tool - worked example of prior learning from experience of working in a bar. This example goes through stages 1 to 7 and is written up in Reflective Exercises 1 and 2 and the SQA Evidence Gathering Form.**

Profiling Tool example	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Working in a pub (eg managing a busy night behind the bar)	<p>Negotiating skills; verbal and non-verbal; written communication; dealing with challenging behaviour; planning; prioritising; problem solving; budgeting resources; ability to understand formal procedures; sense of humour; adaptable; team working; Knowledge: legal framework; own role within legal framework; effects of alcohol; factors that can affect communication; how to work with and manage conflict.</p>	<p>Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).</p>	<p><b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals  <b>HSC 32</b> Promote and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment  <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice  <b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.</p>	For example- Produce additional reflective commentary and link this to National Care Standards

**Profiling Tool - other examples of life experiences. These examples are intended to show the types of skills and knowledge gained from these personal or work experiences. The learner can select from the appropriate examples or can identify other examples. The learner would then work through stages 1 to 7 as in the working in a pub example.**

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Caring for a relative or friend (eg liaising with district nurse re skin care, diet and meds).	Verbal, written communication; telephone; fax; IT skills; negotiating; empathic listening skills; knowledge about medication; information about special diets.	Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).	<b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals <b>HSC 32</b> Promote and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice <b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Child going into hospital	<p>Verbal communication with hospital staff; empathy; age appropriate communication;</p> <p>Non-verbal communication; reassurance; being supportive; negotiating with hospital staff; challenging discriminatory behaviour that goes against child's rights; knowledge of human growth and development; loss and bereavement; theories of change.</p>	<p>Provide example</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).</p>	<p><b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals</p> <p><b>HSC 34</b> Promote the well-being and the protection of children</p> <p><b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.</p>	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Chairing a meeting	Verbal communication; negotiating skills; managing conflicting viewpoints of meeting participants; organisational and planning skills; planning; Knowledge: understanding of systems and policies ; problem solving skills.	Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).	<b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals  <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice  <b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Caring for older relative	<p>Reacting to change in individual's mood; personal hygiene; how to access information; activities eg drawing; promoting choice; problem solving skills; awareness of self; patience; encouraging; supporting people to represent their views to others eg doctor, nurse or other family member; advocacy; verbal and non-verbal behaviour; written communication; understanding the needs of others; helping people understand and express feelings; negotiating skills; problem solving; planning; Knowledge: understanding systems, human behaviour; methods of supporting; understanding of discrimination; managing conflict; impact of environment.</p>	<p>Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).</p>	<p><b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals <b>HSC 32</b> Promote and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice <b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.</p>	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Looking after children	Listening; negotiating; empathic listening skills; age appropriate communication; non-verbal communication; reassurance; knowledge about child development; childhood illnesses; health and safety awareness; problem-solving skills.	<p>Provide example</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).</p>	<p><b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals</p> <p><b>HSC 32</b> Promote and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment</p> <p><b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice</p> <p><b>HSC 34</b> Promote the well-being and the protection of children</p> <p><b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.</p>	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
<p>Groupwork- eg beavers, scouts; brownies; involvement with school activities such as football team</p>	<p>Age appropriate verbal communication; negotiating; empathic listening skills; written communication; organisational and planning skills;            Knowledge: understanding systems and policies; health and safety awareness; problem solving skills.</p>	<p>Provide example            ↓            Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1)            ↓            Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2)            ↓            Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).</p>	<p><b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals  <b>HSC 32</b> Promote and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment  <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice  <b>HSC 34</b> Promote the well-being and the protection of children  <b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.</p>	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Personal experience of counselling	Verbal communication; listening; planning skills; problem-solving	Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form)	<b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals  <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice.	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Drug and alcohol misuse	Verbal communication; listening; planning skills; problem-solving; effects of alcohol and drugs.	Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form)	<b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals  <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice.	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Learning through hobbies	Information gathering skills; verbal and written communication; organisational and planning skills; Knowledge: understanding systems and theories; problem solving skills.	Provide example ↓ Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓ Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓ Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).	<b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals  <b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice.	

Examples of life experiences	Learning and skills gained from prior experience	Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice	Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units	Action I need to take
Caring for people with needs eg autism	Information gathering skills: how to access information; activities eg drawing; promoting choice; problem solving skills; awareness of self; patience; encouraging; supporting people to represent their views to others eg doctor, nurse or other family member; advocacy; verbal and non-verbal behaviour; written communication; understanding the needs of others; helping people understand and express feelings; negotiating skills; problem solving; planning; Knowledge : understanding systems, human behaviour; methods of supporting; understanding of discrimination; managing conflict; impact of environment; health and safety awareness.	<p>Provide example ↓</p> <p>Complete reflective exercise for life experience (Reflective Exercise 1) ↓</p> <p>Complete reflective exercise for relevant practice experience (Reflective Exercise 2) ↓</p> <p>Professional discussion and production of reflective account showing how you translate this into current practice with client group (Evidence Gathering Form).</p>	<p><b>HSC 31</b> Promote effective communication for and about individuals</p> <p><b>HSC 32</b> Promote and maintain health, safety and security in the working environment</p> <p><b>HSC 33</b> Reflect on and develop your practice</p> <p><b>HSC 35</b> Promote choice, well-being and the protection of all individuals.</p>	

## Reflective Exercise 1- worked example

Reflect on one of the life experiences that you identified in the profiling tool

### **Experience: Describe the experience, what happened?**

Working in a pub and dealing with an aggressive customer.

- Customer got angry because I did not serve him quickly enough
- Shouted at me that he should have been served before someone else. I tried to calm him down by saying I would serve him in a minute saying the other person had been waiting longer.
- He pushed the person next to him and spilled his beer. I tried to distract the man saying "I'm ready now what would you like?"
- An argument broke out. I got another bar person to ask if the other person was OK and to offer another pint and shift him away from the scene.
- I tried to chat to the man who was aggressive and distract him from the situation; I gave him space and then tried to reassure him that I was not ignoring him.

### **Knowledge: what do you now know that you did not know before you had the experience?**

- That I can manage difficult situations calmly.
- That people's anger gets triggered by different things.
- People need time and space to calm down.
- Know I can rely on others.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Health and safety/assessment skills.

### **Skills: what can you do now that you could not do before you had the experience, or can do better now because of the experience?**

- Manage difficult situations
- Use my communications skills to manage situations.
- Ability to anticipate and predict problems and try to alleviate them.
- Remain calm in a crisis.
- Seek help immediately.
- Observation skills/negotiation skills.

**Reflections:****What were your feelings and thoughts?****What did you do well?****What would you do differently?****What values did you use?**

- Afraid that there might be a fight.
- Angry that the person acted in that way.
- Confused at being accused of not doing things properly.
- Relieved at it all being resolved.
- Confident about my abilities- that I managed the situation calmly and that I communicated clearly and appropriately
- Happy it went well.
- Values/principle of equality.

**Application: Think of a different situation in which you could apply what you have learned**

- Dealing with the challenging behaviour of others.
- Shift planning/seeing early signs of anger - defuse any situation.
- Defusing arguments in meetings, etc.
- Team working.
- Supporting stressed clients/staff.
- Supporting people to do shopping and person getting anxious/stressed about waiting in a queue and being pushed against.

## Reflective Exercise 2 - worked example

Reflect on a work experience in which you have applied your learning from your life experience to your current social services practice.

### **Experience: Describe the experience, what happened?**

I supported two service users in a shopping trip.

During the trip a good time was spent discussing the purchases to be made, listening to and facilitating the service users' choices and options and giving necessary information as and when they asked for it to enable them to make an informed choice.

Having assisted them with their purchases we made our way to the very busy checkout where there were long queues.

I observed one of the service users becoming quite agitated and verbally confrontational. Through my knowledge of working in similar situations I was aware that there was potential for conflict and therefore I thought it was best to distract the person by offering alternatives to standing in the queue. I suggested we go for a cup of tea to allow the queue to lessen.

### **Knowledge: what knowledge have you built upon or gained as a result of this experience?**

- That people become stressed by different situations.
- Individuals have different ways of reacting to stress.

### **Skills: what skills have you built upon or gained as a result of this experience?**

- Enabling individuals to make choices
- Dealing with stress/anxiety
- Good interpersonal skills
- Good communications skills- verbal and non-verbal

**Reflections: What were your feelings and thoughts?**

**What did you do well?**

**What would you do differently?**

**What values did you use?**

I was aware that there can be difficulties and people can feel stressed and anxious during busy shopping trips, therefore I was constantly aware of the service users' body language and other signs that would indicate they were becoming stressed and anxious.

When we were in the queue I observed one of the service users become agitated and verbally confrontational. Through my knowledge of working in similar situations I was aware that there was potential for conflict and therefore I thought it was best to distract the person by offering alternatives to standing in the queue.

I suggested we go for a cup of tea to allow the queue to lessen. With hindsight other things I could have tried include finding a quiet place to sit or ask if they want to get some fresh air whilst I stood in the queue.

This was also important to maintain a positive community presence.

I used positive and inclusive language at all times respecting the individual's dignity.

**Application: Think of a different situation in which you could apply what you have learned**

- Communicating with a service user in a stressful situation in a private situation
- Working with staff members under stress

## Evidence Gathering Form

<b>Evidence no</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Evidence date</b>	

<b>Direct observation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Reflective account</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Questions</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Expert witness</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Product</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Witness testimony</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Candidate name:</b>	<b>Jane Smith</b>
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<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Unit, Element, PCs</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>
<p>I arranged a trip to the shops following a request from two service users. We decided to go on a weekday when we thought it might not be too busy.</p>		
<p>During the trip a good time was spent discussing the purchases to be made, listening to and facilitating the service users' choices and options and giving necessary information as and when they asked for it to enable them to make an informed choice.</p>	HSC 35.1 Pc 1,6	HSC 31 3a,
<p>I was aware that there can be difficulties and people can feel stressed and anxious during busy shopping trips, therefore I was constantly aware of the service users' body language and other signs that would indicate they were becoming stressed and anxious.</p>	HSC 31.1 pc3,	
<p>Support was tailored to meet each service user's individual needs and preferences eg looking at ways to ensure support enables and empowers the person to make best dietary choices. This is in line with the National Care Standards for care homes for people with learning difficulties. These state that you are confident that staff will treat you politely at all times and always respect your individuality. Although the choices made would not necessarily be my choice, I was nevertheless aware that I could not impose my beliefs and preferences onto them eg as a vegetarian I could so easily bypass the meat counter and by doing this I would inadvertently not be allowing the person the opportunity to make meat one of their dietary choices.</p>	HSC 31.2 pc 3, 6,  HSC 35.2 Pc 2,3,6a	HSC 35 2, 3c, 5a, 8, 16a, 16c,
<p>Having assisted them with their purchases we made our way to the very busy checkout where there were long queues.</p>	HSC31.1 Pc 6a	



**Comments/feedback to candidate**

You have clearly demonstrated your knowledge and practice in relation to communication and promoting the rights and choices of service users. You have made strong reference to the National Care Standards and reflected on how your practice is consistent with these. Reflecting on your prior learning from your previous work experience has also added to your depth of understanding and your ability to analyse and reflect on what is required for competent, effective and safe practice. Your ability to practice and reflect on this practice influenced your management of the situation.

Well done, a very competent reflective account.

**If witness testimony used, please state who supplied testimony and relationship to candidate.**

<b>Expert witness signature</b> (if applicable):	
<b>Candidate signature:</b>	
<b>Assessor signature:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	



## Profiling tool template

<b>Life experience</b>	<b>Learning and skills gained from prior experience</b>	<b>Evidence of application of prior learning to current practice</b>	<b>Potential match with Mandatory/Core Units</b>	<b>Action I need to take</b>



## Reflective Exercise 1

Reflect on one of the life experiences that you identified in the profiling tool.

**Experience: Describe the experience, what happened?**

**Knowledge: what do you now know that you did not know before you had the experience?**

**Skills: what can you do now that you could not do before you had the experience, or can do better now because of the experience?**

**Reflections:**

**What were your feelings and thoughts?**

**What did you do well?**

**What would you do differently?**

**What values did you use?**

**Application: Think of a different situation in which you could apply what you have learned.**

## Reflective Exercise 2

Reflect on a work experience in which you have applied your learning from your life experience to your current Social Services practice.

**Experience: Describe the experience, what happened?**

**Knowledge: what knowledge have you built upon or gained as a result of this experience?**

**Skills: what skills have you built upon or gained as a result of this experience?**

**Reflections:**

**What were your feelings and thoughts?**

**What did you do well?**

**What would you do differently?**

**What values did you use?**

**Application: Think of a different situation in which you could apply what you have learned.**

## Evidence Gathering Form

<b>Evidence no</b>	
<b>Evidence date</b>	

**Direct observation**   
**Questions**   
**Product**

**Reflective account**   
**Expert witness**   
**Witness testimony**

<b>Candidate name:</b>	
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<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Unit, Element, PCs</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>

<b>Additional evidence and clarification</b> This might be used to record additional questions or the candidate may use it to write an additional paragraph.	<b>Unit, Element, PCs</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>

<b>Comments/feedback to candidate</b>
<b>If witness testimony used, please state who supplied testimony and relationship to candidate.</b>

<b>Expert witness signature</b> (if applicable):	
<b>Candidate signature:</b>	
<b>Assessor signature:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

The **Scottish Social Services Council** (SSSC) The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) was established in October 2001 under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act. Set up as part of a drive to raise standards in social services, our role is to increase protection of people who use social services, to raise standards of practice and to increase public confidence in the sector.

The **Scottish Qualifications Authority** (SQA) is committed to ensuring that candidate effort in relation to knowledge, skills and evidence requirements can be recognised without duplication of effort. In order to maintain the integrity of qualifications SQA was happy to participate in the project and in the development of materials.

The **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework** (SCQF) is designed to support the culture of lifelong learning in Scotland. Through the SCQF, all mainstream qualifications in Scotland can be mapped and all learners can identify their current position and plan their future learning pathways. It also provides an extremely important tool through which learning in a wide variety of contexts can be recognised – for example, learning in the workplace or in the community.

The SCQF social services project is managed through the Scottish Social Services Council. Recognition of Prior Informal Learning is a key development in this project. The project works closely with a partnership of stakeholders through the SCQF Co-ordination group for Social Services. The SSSC supports the SCQF to facilitate the learning and development of the social services workforce.

For further copies of these materials please contact the SSSC.



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