



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**

Competency framework for independent advocates

A tool designed to upskill advocates who want to move into a different role within the sector?.

First published: 27 August 2020

Last updated: 25 September 2022

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Go to <https://socialcare.wales/qualifications-funding/competency-framework-for-independent-advocates> for the latest version.

The competency framework for independent advocates is a tool designed to upskill advocates who want to move into a different role within the sector.

Independent advocacy qualification

The City and Guilds level 3 / 4 certificate and diplomas for independent advocacy were replaced in September 2020 with a new City and Guilds level 4 qualification: Professional Practice in Independent Advocacy.

The full [list of recommended qualifications for independent advocates can be found on the Qualification Framework for social care and regulated childcare](#). From September 2020 the City and Guilds level 3 / 4 certificate and diplomas became predecessor qualifications listed under the 'other qualifications' tab. These will continue to be accepted for practice and there is no expectation that those who hold one of the level 3 / 4 certificate or diplomas qualifications will need to complete the new level 4 qualification.

What has changed?

The new level 4 qualification has 2 mandatory units which cut across all forms of independent advocacy including knowledge and understanding of legislation related to:

- Mental health
- Mental capacity
- Adults
- Children and young people

Between 70 and 79% of the total content now sits within the mandatory units. In addition to achievement of the mandatory content, learners will complete one of the 'pathway' units which reflects their role at the time they are undertaking the qualification, either:

- Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)
- Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA)
- Independent advocacy with adults
- Independent advocacy with children and young people.

From time to time, independent advocates move into different roles in the advocacy sector e.g. from IMHA to IMCA. The level 3 / 4 certificate and diplomas had provision for learners to undertake stand alone top up units; the new level 4 qualification is assessed in a different way and top up units are no longer available.

Who should use the competency framework?

There is an expectation that all employers support workers who move into a new role to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to undertake the functions of their role – this applies equally to independent advocates.

The competency framework has been developed using the content of the level 4 pathway units from the independent advocacy qualification. It is applicable to all independent advocates who move roles regardless whether they hold one of the old level 3 / 4 qualifications or the new level 4 qualification.

It is a tool which employers can use alongside their own induction and probation processes; the progress log and completion slip can be used as evidence to commissioners of services and service regulators that the advocate has been supported to develop the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills for their role.

An additional section has been developed for those independent advocates moving to work in Wales from one of the other UK nations, this will ensure that all independent advocates have a good understanding of the legislation which applies in Wales.

How to use the competency framework

The competency framework has a section for each of the independent advocacy roles. Each section has a table which sets out the knowledge, understanding and practice the independent advocate should demonstrate to illustrate their competence.

- Learning outcomes and criteria are taken directly from the pathway units within the qualification
- Suggested actions set out ways the independent advocate may be supported to achieve the criteria. You may want to add to these e.g. internal training course, e-learning etc.

- Suggested sources of evidence set out how employers may judge whether the independent advocate has met the criteria, again, you may want to add to these
- There is a notes column for employers to record any actions or good practice
- Each criteria should be dated and initialled as it is signed as a record of progress.

There is a completion certificate at the end of each section which should be signed and dated by the employer and independent advocate.

You may wish to continue to use your own induction and probation framework, if this is the case, we suggest it is cross referenced to ensure all of the listed criteria is covered.

[Section 1: Competency framework for independent advocates with adults](#)

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[Section 2: Competency framework for independent advocates with children and young people](#)

DOCX 123KB

[Section 3: Competency framework for Independent Mental Health Advocates](#)

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[Section 4: Competency framework for Independent Mental Capacity Advocates](#)

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[Section 5: Legislation for independent advocates who have qualified in England or Northern Ireland](#)

DOCX 127KB

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