

Who Provides the Care Certificate?

Agency, employer and provider responsibilities

The employer signs it off. Use this quick-reference tool to identify who holds responsibility, who may assess, and what can be outsourced.

England | Care Certificate: 16 standards (updated 2025) | Last updated: 28 August 2026

THE RULE THAT SETTLES IT

The health or adult social care employer must take responsibility for final sign-off. Training, supervision and workplace assessment may be supported or outsourced, but an external learning provider must not sign and issue the Care Certificate.

Which kind of agency or employer are you?

YOU ARE	DO YOU EMPLOY THE WORKERS?	CQC-REGISTERED?	WHO SIGNS OFF?
Recruitment / employment agency Supplying workers to care homes, NHS trusts or other providers	Usually no - the client employs or engages them for the role.	Usually not for the supply function itself.	The health or adult social care employer/provider. The receiving organisation must assure induction, training and competence for the role.
Domiciliary care agency Delivering regulated personal care in people's homes	Yes. You are the employer/provider.	Yes, where carrying on the regulated activity of personal care.	You. Final sign-off remains with the employer. Assessment can be carried out by a competent assessor.
Introduction-only agency Introducing a personal assistant to an individual employer	No.	Varies by arrangement; individual employers are not CQC-registered providers simply because they employ a PA.	The individual employer, if they choose to use the Care Certificate standards as part of induction.

Three points to state plainly

- Competent does not mean 'qualified assessor'. The assessor must be competent in the standard they assess. Skills for Care says there is no requirement to hold an assessor qualification; the employer must be confident the assessor is competent.
- Different standards can need different assessors. Skills for Care gives Basic Life Support as an example where a different assessor may be appropriate.
- eLearning or a workbook alone cannot complete the Care Certificate. They can support knowledge, but required skills must be assessed in the workplace unless simulation is explicitly permitted.

TWO RULES PEOPLE MISS

Before working unsupervised: staff should be supervised until they can demonstrate the required level of competence for their role.

If all standards are not met: the Care Certificate itself should not be awarded. Completion of individual learning elements is not the same as final Care Certificate sign-off.

Responsibility record - Care Certificate

Complete this card and retain it with your induction / competence records.

Worker	_____
We are	☐ Recruitment agency ☐ Domiciliary care agency ☐ Introduction-only agency ☐ Individual employer ☐ Other
Who holds final sign-off?	_____
Training / assessment support outsourced to	_____
Named competent assessor(s)	_____ _____
Competence confirmed for role	☐ Yes ☐ No Date: _____
Care Certificate final sign-off	☐ Awarded ☐ Not yet awarded Date: _____
Records / portfolio location	_____

Based on official guidance

Skills for Care - Care Certificate standards (2025). Confirms the current 16 standards and provides the assessor/employer guide and certificate template.

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

Skills for Care - Care Certificate assessor and employer guide (March 2025). Covers competence, assessment and assessor requirements.

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate-Standards/Care-Certificate-assessor-and-employer-guide-March-2025.pdf>

Skills for Care - Care Certificate standards FAQs. States that the health or adult social care employer is responsible for final sign-off and external learning providers must not sign and issue the certificate.

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/resources/documents/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate-Standards/Care-Certificate-standards-FAQs.pdf>

CQC - Regulation 18: Staffing. Requires appropriate induction, training, supervision and appraisal, with learning and development needs identified at the start of employment and reviewed thereafter.

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

Using online training? Caredemy can support the knowledge-learning elements and portfolio evidence. Final workplace assessment and Care Certificate sign-off remain the employer's responsibility.

Prepared by Caredemy. This practical resource is for organisations and individual employers in England. It is a quick-reference guide, not legal advice. Always check current Skills for Care and CQC guidance for your setting.