

## Quality Standards

Delivery of Habilitation Training  
(Mobility and Independent Living Skills)  
for Children and Young People with  
Visual Impairment



These Quality Standards are designed to ensure that children and young people with visual impairment are enabled, through high quality mobility and independence training and support, to achieve the greatest possible independence and maximise their educational outcomes and life chances



# Foreword

The Quality Standards 2nd Edition are revised and updated from the original version authored by Dr Olga Miller, Dr Karl Wall, and Dr Malcom Garner (2011). A decade has passed since their first conception, and many of the original outcomes of the Mobility21 Project remain pertinent to the profession 10 years on: testament to the rigour applied in the development of this crucial provision. Their previous conception of habilitation provision principles remains constant and has ensured that thousands of children and young people with vision impairment and blindness in the UK have access to high quality, rigorous, and standardised habilitation delivery.

The Second Edition of the Quality Standards enhances existing practices and accounts for the nuanced, bespoke needs of children and young people with vision impairment across the UK. The updated standards have been collaboratively informed by practitioners and professionals. Changes to legislation are presented, in addition to the importance of including and championing positive mental health outcomes such as resilience, self-advocacy and self- agency.

The term habilitation is used throughout the standards. This recognises and reinforces the distinct, significant, and powerful provision for children and young people with vision impairment and blindness. Habilitation is anchored in child development and not bound by rehabilitative adult-centred principles. The Quality Standards (2nd Edition) remain true to the unifying collaborative ethos, working with a multidisciplinary team and ensuring the child or young person remains central to the provision delivered. The voice of the child is embedded into these Standards and the updated version includes and values positive social, emotional, and mental health outcomes.

These Standards reinforce the previous objective regarding a baseline for habilitation and account for changes and additions to the

professional practice role as observed and reported over time. The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by those delivering the training are clearly identified in the Standards. Further, for the children and young people receiving the training, learning outcomes and expectations are provided. The approach remains consistent with the aspirations outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, and legislative changes across the devolved nations of the UK.

This version honours the original tenets for habilitation provision, offering an updated approach to maximising and championing the independence of children and young people with vision impairment and blindness and their families. Through high quality habilitation training we support children and young people with vision impairment and blindness to achieve the greatest possible independence and maximise their educational outcomes and life chances.

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**How to cite this publication**

Hayton, J., & Wood, A. (2022). *Quality Standards: Delivery of Habilitation Training (Mobility and Independent Living Skills) for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment* (2nd ed.). RNIB.

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# Abbreviations used

<b>CYPVI</b>	children and young people with vision impairment (includes those with severe sight impairment/blindness)
<b>QHA</b>	Qualified Habilitation Assistant
<b>QHS</b>	Qualified Habilitation Specialist
<b>QTVI</b>	Qualified Teacher for the Visually Impaired
<b>EHCP</b>	Education Healthcare Plan (England)
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan (Wales)
<b>SEN</b>	Statement of Educational Need (N. Ireland)
<b>ASL</b>	Additional support for Learning (Scotland)
<b>SEND</b>	Special Education needs and Disabilities
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority

## Quality Standards – Delivery of Habilitation Training (Mobility and Independent Living Skills) to Children and Young People with Vision Impairment

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### Overview:

These quality standards have been developed from previous research and consultations undertaken with Habilitation VI UK, UCL Institute of Education, Guide Dogs, Torfaen Vision Impairment Service and the Scottish Sensory Centre. The Quality Standards have been updated considering consultation and the development of professional practice since their first conception.

Whilst not yet mandatory it is hoped they will:

- Illustrate good practice in the provision of habilitation skills, training, and support
- Help guide and encourage the development of local habilitation skills provision and support
- Assist local authorities and others in determining appropriate resources and arrangements
- Assist in the monitoring and evaluation process
- Provide guidance for recruitment, the expectation of qualification and the knowledge and experience of staff
- Keeping up to date with knowledge and skills through continued professional development

These habilitation skills standards have been specifically designed to complement the Quality Standards for Children and Young People with Vision impairment, which were approved by the DfES and strongly recommended for implementation (\*LA/0138/2002; June 2002).

They also take account of subsequent published quality standards documents including:

- Quality Standards in Education Support Services for Children and Young People who are Deafblind/Multi-Sensory Impaired (SENSE, 2003)
- Quality Standards in Education Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment (SERSEN, October 2003)
- Quality Standards for Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and Outreach Services (DCSF, Sept 2008)
- Quality Outcomes for Mandatory VI Teaching Qualifications (TDA, 2008)
- Quality Standards for Children and Young people for Liaison Psychiatry Services (2019)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Quality Standards for Vision impairment (RNIB 2012)

These Standards for habilitation also account for relevant devolved legislation across the UK pertinent to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Additional Learning Needs and Additional Support for Learning and legislation which relates to safeguarding. Consideration ought to be given to the relevant devolved nation's legislation and safeguarding practices throughout this document. This is including but not exclusive to:

## Scotland

Education (Scotland) Act (2016)

Additional Support for learning Act (2004) and (as amended) code of practice 3rd edition statutory guidance (2017)

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000)

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014)

Mental Health (Scotland) Act (2015)

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act (2007)

New national guidance on Child Protection due out in 2021 see: <https://consult.gov.scot/child-protection/consultation-on-the-revised-national-guidance/>

How Good Is Our Sensory Service? (SSC, 2009)

## Wales

Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act (2021)

## Northern Ireland

Special Educational Needs and disability Act (Northern Ireland) (2016)

## Outcomes for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment

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These standards are specifically designed as a guide to the quality of services required to achieve the following outcomes for CYPVI.

- The maximum degree of independent living
- The maximum degree of independent travel and mobility
- The maximum degree of emotional well-being, including self-determination
- The maximum degree of social inclusion
- Competence in the use of any specialist habilitation tools such as aids to mobility and independence
- The ability to be able to assess risks and anticipate likely areas of personal difficulty in mobility and independent living

The above outcomes, specifically for children and young people CYPVI, are additional to and complement the four strategic outcomes as outlined in the Children's Plan 2020. These apply to all children and young people, including those with any special need, and are grouped under the headings of:

- Promoting the health and wellbeing of babies, children, and young people
- Safeguarding and supporting children and families
- Supporting achievement and academic attainment

- Empowering families to be strong and achieve economic wellbeing

These Quality Standards for habilitation also encompass the four capacities of the Scottish Curriculum for excellence. Namely:

1. Successful Learners
2. Effective Contributors
3. Responsible Citizens
4. Confident Individuals

The development of these Quality Standards has also included consideration of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and the Children's and Families Act 2014 (England & Wales); the Additional Support for Learning Act 2016 Scotland); the Special Educational need & disability Act Northern Ireland 2016; which places a duty on each local authority to provide a published statement about services available for families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and how they are involved in the decision making. The key features are namely: Information and Transparency, Assessment & Participation and Feedback, which are reflected in these quality standards.

The Equality Act 2010 which outlines the protection against discrimination in education and the Care Act 2014 which supports people moving from children to adult care to support services, known as the Transition to Adulthood.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2021) which outlines the responsibility of all staff working in education to safeguard and promote the welfare of children  
(see <http://www.education.gov.uk/> for further details)

The key principles underpinning the legislation include:

- The importance of the views of the child or young person, and the child's parents
- The importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
- The need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood

These principles are designed to support:

- The early identification of children and young people's needs and, early intervention to support them
- The needs and participation of children, their parents/ caregivers, and young people in decision-making
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over support
- Collaboration between education, health, and social care services to provide support
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment

This is to ensure that parents/caregivers, together with all others involved in the support and education of CYPVI, are provided with appropriate information, and the guidance and support necessary to enable them to play their part in the achievement outcomes listed above. An inclusive approach at the heart of which is the voice of the child.



# 1 Introduction and Purpose of the Quality Standards

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## 1.1 The nature of vision impairment

Vision impairment for the purposes of these standards, is defined in functional rather than clinical terms. A child is understood to have a vision impairment if **their level of functional vision has an adverse effect on their education, mobility, and their ability to live independently.**

## 1.2 The purpose of the Standards

With the increasing emphasis in education for independence and inclusion, the ability of a person with vision impairment to be physically, socially, and emotionally independent are important outcomes throughout the child's development and later into adulthood. Despite significant progress that has been made in achieving successful educational and social inclusion for many CYPVI, the provision of good quality training in mobility and independent living remains variable, and, in some cases, non-existent.

The purpose of these Standards is therefore to:

- Increase equality of access to habilitation training (mobility, orientation, and independent living) across the UK
- Assist in ensuring effective partnership working between specialist teaching services, schools, and habilitation services
- Illustrate good practice in service delivery

- Provide guidance to assist Local Authorities and others in determining and commissioning appropriate resources and arrangements
- Assist with the planning, monitoring and evaluation process
- Clarify what should be expected in the roles of a QHS or a QHA (See section Annex B for further details)
- Clarify what should be considered and included within a specialist training course leading to a qualification in habilitation training for CYPVI
- Clarify what a young person should expect to experience resulting from working with a Qualified Habilitation Professional (i.e., a QHA and QHS)
- Clarify what a parent would expect their child to be receiving from a Qualified Habilitation Professional (i.e., a QHA and QHS)

### **1.3 The Target Audience for the Quality Standards**

The Standards should be of value and interest to:

- Young people with vision impairment
- Parents and caregivers
- Habilitation Specialists and Habilitation Assistants
- Related professionals including but not exclusive to, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Sensory Service Managers and Qualified Teachers for the Visually Impaired

- Staff in educational settings accepting pupils with VI (including early years provision, schools, and colleges)
- Commissioners for the provision of habilitation training
- Higher education: in planning appropriate training courses

## **1.4 The Coverage and Organisation of the Quality Standards**

The Standards relate to children and young people with vision impairment from birth, during the pre-school stage, then across all the phases of education including the transition to adulthood. For ease of use they are therefore grouped in four sections:

- Assessment
- Early Years
- School Years
- Transition to Adulthood

## 2 General Principles: Effective Planning and Delivery of Habilitation Training

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### 2.1 Qualified Habilitation Workers (QHS)

There are two levels of professional qualification in the delivery of habilitation training to CYPVI and two resulting grades of Qualified Habilitation Professional. These are the Qualified Habilitation Specialist (QHS) and the Qualified Habilitation Assistant (QHA). The role and responsibility of each is provided in more detail in Annex B in the form of model job descriptions. In summary form:

The QHS can demonstrate a high level of professional competence in habilitation work and is the lead specialist in the assessment, lesson planning, delivery, and review of Habilitation training for a child or young person.

The QHA can demonstrate a level of professional competence that allows them to work effectively **under the direction of** a QHS, possibly in a larger authority where there is a team of qualified habilitation professionals.

### 2.2 Effective planning and delivery of Habilitation training for CYPVI

In planning, implementing, and delivering habilitation skills training for the CYPVI, the Qualified Habilitation Professional should take account of the following features.

The need to:

- Ensure that all CYPVI have equality of access to habilitation skill support from professionals with appropriate qualifications and experience

- Ensure the QHS/QHA work collaboratively with other agencies, including health, education, social services, career and work guidance services, and voluntary agencies
- Develop the skills of parents and professionals involved to enable them to be effective partners in the delivery of the habilitation skills programme
- Contribute to shared planning documentation and subsequent review of it
- Regularly monitor and evaluate pupil progress and achievements and share this information with the pupil, parents and caregivers, school staff and other relevant professionals
- Undertake appropriate environmental access audit including the student where possible, and risk assessments; identifying and deploying risk management strategies in a systematic way, taking account of the different settings in which the habilitation skills programme is to be delivered
- Incorporate, as appropriate, training for the young person and those around them in the use of specialist habilitation equipment including but not exclusive to mobility canes, independent living skills equipment
- Be accountable to children and young people with vision impairment, parents, pupils, schools, and the LA
- Respect and value diversity and cultural difference

### **2.3 Effective working practices when delivering habilitation training**

In working with the child or young person with VI, the QHS should also take account of the following features:

The need to:

- Communicate effectively with the young person regarding the nature and purpose of the strategies and activities being undertaken, taking account of their communicative and linguistic competence
- Work collaboratively with the young person in monitoring and recording progress in the development of their habilitation skills
- Enable and encourage pupils with VI and their parents to be as fully involved as possible in the planning, implementation, and review process of the habilitation training programme
- Use an understanding of typical child development to inform the observation, identification and recording of the habilitation skills needs of the CYPVI
- Take account of any additional sensory, physical, or learning needs
- Incorporate, as appropriate, training for the young person and those around them in making risk assessments, auditing their access within the environment, and developing related risk management strategies.



## **3 Key Habilitation Contexts**

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### **3.1 Habilitation training in the Home Environment**

This will require the QHS to recognise and acknowledge that the prime support in the home is usually provided by parents. Parents, together with the young person themselves, should be fully involved in all aspects of habilitation skills training.

This should include consideration of:

- The need to create a supportive environment
- Risk assessment, risk management, and control of risk
- Cultural expectations and practices
- Social expectations and practices
- The developmental stage of the child/young person
- The need for high expectations and aspirations in terms of achievement
- The importance of challenging but realistic outcomes

### **3.2 Habilitation Training in Educational Environments**

(Including Nursery, Primary and Secondary School, College, University)

The QHS should take account of the following factors:

The need to:

- Work collaboratively and effectively with school and other staff in the educational setting (including but not exclusive to the SENCo, Form/Personal Tutor, QTVI) for CYPVI to achieve the full range of skills necessary to prepare them for their next stage of life
- Evaluate and respond to the habilitation demands of specific aspects of the environment and curriculum of the school or other educational setting
- Assist the child or young person with VI, and staff of educational settings, in achieving effective social inclusion

### **3.3 Habilitation and Training in Public Environments**

(e.g., Home area facilities, travelling, social and leisure environments)

The QHS should take account of the following factors:

The need to:

- Work collaboratively and effectively with parents, professionals and others working in public settings
- Evaluate and respond to the habilitation demands of different aspects of public environments and how these relate to the habilitation curriculum being followed by the child or young person
- Assist the CYPVI, and those around them in public environments, in achieving effective social inclusion

## **4 Quality Standards in the Delivery of Habilitation Training**

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### **4.1 Assessment and monitoring of Habilitation needs**

Assessment of the habilitation needs of a CYPVI should always be holistic and take account of the views and knowledge of others, including the voice of the child and their family. Various forms of assessment may be needed, but in this section, the focus is on assessment of the need for orientation, mobility, and independence training (Habilitation) and the features of importance in the implementation and monitoring of any training programme. This includes assessment of early years.

### **4.2 Quality Standards in Assessment of need for Habilitation training**

Supporting evidence:

- A1 The initial assessment of the Habilitation needs of a child or young person is made by a QHS working in partnership with parents, a QTVI and school staff
- A2 Where there are learning and complex needs in addition to a vision impairment, assessments are always carried out by a QHS experienced in this area or by a QHS in conjunction with other professionals with relevant experience
- A3 Children and young people have contributed their own views as part of any assessment and, when appropriate, support is offered to help them to do so

- A4 Parents/care givers have been fully involved in the assessment process and are encouraged and supported, if necessary, to make their contribution
- A5 Assessment procedures have clear aims, are well structured and are clearly understood by all involved, with jargon-free explanations of assessment findings being given as appropriate
- A6 Assessment and monitoring is ongoing over time, focuses on a variety of situations and environments, is clearly recorded, and reviewed on a timely basis
- A7 Assessment and monitoring leads to a structured programme of support and written recommendations regarding practical strategies to be adopted to maximise the child's potential for mobility and independent living
- A8 Where QTVI and professionals from other agencies are involved, joint assessments are undertaken to ensure there is linkage between programmes of support and that arrangements for delivery are complementary
- A9 Results of assessment are incorporated within the EHCP/IEP/ASDL/Statement of educational Need, provision mapping and reviewed in line with the appropriate devolved nations legislation and practice.

### **4.3 Habilitation training in Early Years Provision**

The importance of specialist medical and educational intervention being provided as early as possible is now universally accepted across the UK (see: SEND Code of Practice England, 2014; SEN Code of Practice Northern Ireland, 2016; Additional Support for Learning Act Scotland, 2004; Children and Families Act, 2014).

The same principle applies to the provision of habilitation support, which for very young children has a strong developmental focus. Starting a Habilitation programme early in life will also enable good practice to become established from the outset and avoid the development of bad habits or practice which would then need to be modified at a later stage.

It is therefore essential that there should be involvement from a QHS, working in partnership with the QTVI, as soon as possible after diagnosis and referral. Involvement from a QHS and QHA should continue to be available as often as appropriate, according to individual need and circumstance.

It is particularly important at this stage, when the child is mainly in the home environment, that the significant role of parents and caregivers is fully acknowledged. In this regard all work should be carried out in partnership with parents/ caregivers, taking account of their personal circumstances, beliefs, and lifestyles, and with an awareness of the social, cultural, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs and resilience of the child and the family.

Any other agencies involved should also be consulted and kept informed of recommendations to provide a seamless service for the child. In Scotland, the QHS should follow the “Getting it Right for Every Child” model as enshrined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014).

#### **4.4 Quality Standards for Habilitation training in Early Years Provision**

##### **Supporting evidence:**

That, in conjunction with the QTVI:

- EY1    There are, as appropriate, home visits from Qualified Habilitation Specialists

- EY2 The QHS provides parents/caregivers with information regarding the aims and purposes of mobility, orientation, and independence training at an early stage and in an appropriate format
- EY3 The QHS provides, as and when appropriate, a programme of orientation & mobility and independence training
- EY4 Parents/care givers are consulted regarding any programme of support and intervention
- EY5 Any programme of Habilitation skills support includes activities to support specific outcomes
- EY6 Habilitation skills outcomes are included within the respective devolved nation's LA legislative application protocol and reviewed in line with these processes or other forms of planning documentation
- EY7 Input from a QHS is available to advise childcare, pre-school or nursery staff regarding Habilitation skills needs of the child
- EY8 Before school entry:

The QHS is part of the transition planning process and advice to help enable a smooth transfer into the early years setting. For CYPVI with more severe levels of vision impairment, this is likely to require the following actions:

- a) Liaison takes place with the SENCo and/or Headteacher of the receiving school
- b) An induction programme is developed to include
  - i. In-service training to inform the school staff of the mobility and independence needs of the child
  - ii. Advice on any necessary adaptation to the environment and/or curriculum in conjunction with the QTVI

- iii. Information in relation to eye-condition and the potential impact
- c) Additional resources necessary to aid mobility and independence are provided
- d) A programme of support monitoring is put in place by the school to ensure that the Habilitation skills needs of the CYPVI are known to the relevant teachers and other staff
- e) The environment is risk assessed and advice is given regarding environmental access

EY9 After the child's entry into nursery and/or school:

- a) The QHS makes follow-up visits to ensure that the mobility and independence needs of the child are being met
- b) The QHS checks that school staff (particularly any QHAs involved) are confident of their own role in this process

## **4.5 Habilitation training in School/College Years**

The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of parliament. It covers all aspects of school life reflecting how a school treats pupils and prospective pupils, parents and carers, employees, and members of the community. Everything a school does must be fair, non-discriminatory, and not put individuals or groups of people at a disadvantage. Particularly, a school must not discriminate, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to:

- Admission
- The way it provides education for pupils
- How it provides access to any benefit, facility, or service
- Excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

The Equality Act not only includes improving access to the school's physical environment (e.g., provision of blinds, of adjusting lighting, handrails, carpeting), but also to the curriculum and written information provided for pupils (e.g., handouts, worksheets and timetables in braille, large print or audio tape). It includes extra-curricular activities (e.g., school trips, sporting activities, after-school clubs). It also applies to the provision of support to enable such pupils to attain the maximum possible level of independence and mobility.

Assessment of the implications of sensory impairment on mobility and independence within the school should always be carried out by a QHS (working in conjunction with the QTVI) and regularly reviewed.

#### **4.6 Quality Standards for Habilitation training during the school/college years**

##### **Supporting evidence:**

- SY1 The CYPVI has, as appropriate, access to and support from a QHS throughout their school/college years
- SY2 Support offered in conjunction with the QTVI includes:
  - a) Planning with the CYPVI's teacher(s) in their management of any associated teaching assistant and the CYPVI's learning goals
  - b) Planning with any associated QHA, Teaching Assistant or higher-level teaching assistant and relevant school/college staff (e.g., SENCo and a QTVI)
  - c) Advice on provision of necessary adaptation to the school/college environment

- d) Provision of specialist equipment, where necessary, with training given in its use to CYPVIs, staff and parents, as appropriate
  - e) Monitoring the maintenance of specialist equipment and its effective use
  - f) Awareness raising for peers
  - g) Training and information for school/college governors and administrative and other staff
- SY3 All staff working with CYPVI are offered appropriate training and support to ensure that they are aware of the habilitation needs of these pupils, and that they have the confidence and skills necessary to interact with them appropriately
- SY4 The QHS provides advice which is considered and forms part of the LA's legislative additional needs provision for example, EHCP/CSP/IEP or similar
- SY5 Children and young people with vision impairment are encouraged and supported to be involved in decision making and in planning their own programme of habilitation skills support
- SY6 Parents and caregivers receive clear information about habilitation needs in the school/college and the provision made to address these needs
- SY7 Consideration has been given to ensuring the habilitation needs of the CYPVI continue to be met in the home, and in the home area, and in a way that is complementary to that provided in the school environment

- SY8 Efforts have been made, as appropriate and where possible, to encourage and enable the young person with vision impairment to travel independently and have the confidence and skills to access their home and their local home area (e.g., shops, leisure facilities and community hubs, libraries, parks etc
- SY9 Where a CYPVI has additional difficulties, these are considered in all aspects of habilitation skills planning and provision, and staff with the relevant expertise are involved
- SY10 Where necessary, CYPVI have access to appropriate specialist mobility aids (e.g., a symbol cane) and adaptive equipment (e.g., a liquid level indicator) including any relevant training in the use of this equipment
- SY11 Habilitation needs and skills are considered when planning, monitoring, and assessing the outcomes of work experiences placements and in subsequent career planning and transitions
- SY12 Effective arrangements are in place, prior to school/college transfer, to prepare both the CYPVI and the receiving educational institution
- SY13 An appropriate level of habilitation skills support is provided and maintained through and beyond the period of transition

## **4.7 Habilitation training in the transition to adulthood**

The move from school/college to the world of further or higher education, adult services or employment will always present fresh challenges to the young person with habilitation needs. It is to be hoped that, by this stage, the young person with vision impairment will have gained confidence and developed skills in independent orientation, mobility, and living.

At this stage in the young person's development, it will be increasingly important to recognise, encourage and support their capacity for determining their own life course. One important element of this self-determination will be the young person's ability to self-advocate. This skill should therefore be a major focus of Habilitation support during this phase of their life, and the views and wishes expressed by the person will largely determine what further support and Habilitation skills training they receive as they progress from statutory education into further education and employment.

#### **4.8 Quality Standards for Habilitation training during the transition to adulthood**

##### **Supporting evidence:**

That, in conjunction with the QTVI and, as appropriate, Habilitation Specialist and/or other VI specialist:

- T1 Future Habilitation needs of the CYPVI are included in transition planning or annual review meeting in Years 9-12 and at least 12 months before the young person intends to leave school in Scotland
- T2 The CYPVI is fully involved in the planning and review of support and resources (e.g., DLA, PIPS, student finance and Access to Work Scheme).
- T3 Links are made at an early stage with specialist adult mobility services for people with vision impairment and with the career and work guidance services
- T4 Detailed assessment of Habilitation needs has been undertaken by a QHS prior to interview and placement in college, university, or workplace

- T5 Detailed environmental access audit and risk assessment has been completed and risk management strategies identified in advance
- T6 Arrangements for any ongoing habilitation skill support are put in place prior to the student transferring from school/ college
- T7 The receiving establishment is fully informed of the mobility and independence needs of the student, prior to placement
- T8 Any potential habilitation skills or awareness training required by staff and/or fellow students is discussed with the CYPVI, and joint decisions are made as to the format, content, and timing as to such training
- T9 The student is well prepared for the transition (e.g., through mobility sessions, familiarisation visits in advance)
- T10 Referral has been made, in advance, to appropriate agencies (e.g., Social Care, Voluntary Bodies etc.) to ensure that the student and their family have appropriate advice regarding the full range of personal and technical support (particularly ICT) available



# Annex A

## Sample specification for a Habilitation Service for Children and Young people with vision impairment

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### Note:

The following specification is not intended to provide a complete list of all the activities that will be undertaken by QHS or QHA. Rather, it is designed to provide, in a brief and concise form, the key elements of support to be offered, and clarify the need for appropriately qualified specialists in this field of work.

### Service Specification

Each Local Authority has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the respective devolved nations legislation (SEND Code of Practice England, 2014; SEN Code of Practice Northern Ireland, 2016; Additional Support for Learning Act Scotland, 2004) to provide support of high quality for children and young people with any form of learning difficulty or disability. Outlined here are recommendations for service specification and service provision.

For children and young people with vision impairment/ blindness this will include support from the QHS or QHA to enable them to achieve the greatest degree of independence in living, and in orientation, mobility, and travel.

A QTVI will also be involved to provide educational and other support and will work closely with specialist Habilitation professionals in the Habilitation Service.

The Habilitation Service should work with all babies, children and young people who are blind or who have significant visual difficulties which may be ocular, cerebral or both ocular and cerebral, which will inhibit their ability to travel and live independently.

QHS/QHA should become involved with VI children and their parents/caregivers as soon as possible after diagnosis has been confirmed, and as part of the multidisciplinary Team around the Child.

The overall aim of the Habilitation Service for CYPVI is to provide programmes of individual training and support to enable young people to experience the highest degree of personal agency and independent living skills, to competently assess and negotiate risks, and to manage all relationships and social interactions with confidence.

Training and support should also be offered to families, school staff and the child's peers, helping them to learn more about the challenges often faced by people with VI in the areas of mobility and independent living, as well as the range of specialist skills and strategies that can be used by people with VI and those around them

The Habilitation Specialist should ensure that strong links are established with local orientation, mobility & independence specialists working with adults and that these connections facilitate a smooth and co-ordinated transition to adult services for the young person, and that they have the skills and confidence to access an appropriate service at each stage

All staff employed in this capacity within the Service should be qualified, or be in the process of qualifying, as a QHS or QHA.

### **QHS and QHA employed within the service will:**

- Work in a range of environments, including the home and home area, educational, and public settings.
- Provide support at times of transition within and between these settings.
- Provide daytime support, but also provide home visits and support in the evening, as may be necessary for CYPVI with night blindness.
- Assess the Habilitation needs of CYPVI and develop programmes of support based on their assessment.
- Provide age-appropriate, ongoing training which teaches children and young people with vision impairment to move safely and efficiently in their home, school, work, and community settings, and as independently as possible.
- Provide a range of training, from basic skills to enable independence in indoor and campus environments, to cane training and safety skills.
- Advise on strategies, such as personal care and home skills, which can facilitate independence in daily living.
- Advise on the ways in which independence skills and the capacity for self-determination can have an important role in promoting positive mental health and emotional well-being
- Provide training on issues such as sighted guiding for those working with the CYPVI, as well as for their families, including key people such as parents, friends, and teaching assistance to aid skill consolidation as part of the training process
- Be involved in helping CYPVI to access leisure and community services.

- Undertake environmental access audits.
- Give advice to improve physical access to the environment.
- Regularly work with other professionals to share expertise and knowledge about their students.

## **The roles of specific Habilitation workers: The Specialist and the Assistant.**

### **Role of Qualified Habilitation Specialist (QHS)**

In terms of devising a comprehensive programme of Habilitation work (orientation, mobility, and independence skills), a Qualified Specialist would be expected to:

- Assess the Habilitation needs of the CYPVI
- Devise programmes of Habilitation training and plan, implement and evaluate programmes
- Work in collaboration with other professionals where necessary to ensure that habilitation is included in other programmes, establishing a working relationship with the QHA, other Qualified Habilitation Specialists, and the multi-disciplinary team supporting the child
- Advise, support and train those around the CYPVI, including QHA and other mobility support staff
- Identify key areas and skills for trained Habilitation and mobility support staff (including QHA to implement or reinforce with the CYPVI)
- Emphasise the importance of cross-curricular habilitation training and education

- Monitor the delivery of all habilitation (orientation, mobility, and independence) programmes being implemented
- Deliver any outdoor route familiarisation
- Deliver all cane skills training
- Implement and deliver training in technological mobility aids – including appropriate apps and/or integrated services (e.g., automated announcements)
- Implement and deliver all independent travel skills including use of public transport
- Devise Habilitation training programmes that include an integrated approach to the development of social and self-determination skills
- Keep up to date with all relevant educational and legislative developments, particularly those relating to habilitation, vision impairment, disability, and additional educational needs

### **Role of Qualified Habilitation Assistant (QHA)**

In terms of devising a comprehensive programme of Habilitation work (mobility and independence skills), a QHA would be expected, under the guidance of a QHS, to:

- Demonstrate an awareness of the need for CYPVI to be as independent as possible
- Establish working relationships with the QHS and multi-disciplinary team supporting the child
- Introduce and use a range of sighted guide techniques with CYPVI

- Introduce and reinforce CYPVI use of a range of pre-cane skills
- Introduce and support CYPVI room familiarisation
- Support CYPVI in simple indoor route familiarisation
- Reinforce the development of CYPVI sensory awareness
- Participate in the delivery and reinforcement of environmental awareness programmes
- Participate in the delivery and reinforcement of programmes aimed at developing and improving personal agency, social and self-determining skills
- Reinforce the use of shopping skills
- Support experiential exercises involving public transport
- Contribute to the monitoring of good practice in respect of cane skills and have an awareness of techniques that may have been specifically adapted to meet the needs of individual CYPVI
- Know what constitutes good Habilitation practice but refer bad practice or the introduction of new skills to the Habilitation Specialist
- Keep up to date with all relevant educational and legislative developments, particularly those in relation to Habilitation, VI, disability and additional education needs

# Annex B

## Minimum Model Job Descriptions for QHS and QHA

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### Qualified Habilitation Specialist (QHS)

Model Job Description:

#### The QHS should:

Hold a specialist Graduate Certificate in Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (Children and Young People) or the Habilitation Degree with Honours qualification. These are the pathways that meet the learning outcomes arising from the 'Quality Standards – Delivery of Habilitation Training (Mobility and Independent Living Skills) for Children and Young People with Vision impairment (2011; 2021)': Qualification Participant Learning Outcomes.

#### Job Description

As a Qualified Habilitation Specialist you will be required to:

1. Co-ordinate all aspects of the provision of Habilitation (Mobility, Orientation, and Independent Living) training for Children and Young People (CYPVI) who are blind or partially sighted (0-25 years within Insert: **Name of local authority or area or service**)
2. Manage and organise the deployment of any Qualified Habilitation Assistants (QHA).
3. Assess and monitor the Habilitation (Mobility, Orientation, and Independent Living) training needs of Children and Young People who are blind or partially sighted (CYPVI) (0-25 years).

4. Undertake environmental access audits in the home, school or public areas as required, for specific Habilitation programmes.
5. Undertake appropriate risk assessments and put in place appropriate risk management strategies.
6. Develop individual Habilitation (mobility and independence) training programmes based on needs identified, in agreement with the CYPVI and/or, where appropriate, parents, caregivers and others closely involved.
7. Deliver appropriate individual Habilitation training to CYPVI in a range of settings (e.g., homes and home area, nurseries, schools, colleges, and public places of relevance to the CYPVI and their needs).
8. Undertake home visits and, on occasions, work in the evenings and when it is dark to assess and train CYPVI with night blindness.
9. Provide guidance and support to parents/caregivers to ensure Habilitation (mobility and independence) training in the school and home settings is complementary and consistent.
10. Provide support in Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) for CYPVI at times of transition to and between educational settings.
11. Liaise with parents, teachers, teaching assistants, ancillary workers and other professionals within educational settings or other health professionals who may be involved with the CYPVI (though this may not be in an educational setting e.g., early years and clinics) regarding the Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) needs of CYPVI.
12. Maintain detailed records of Habilitation (mobility and independence) provision for CYPVI on caseload and write reports as appropriate adopting a 'plan, do, review' approach.

13. Plan and deliver training in Habilitation to staff working with CYPVI, and for peer groups of such pupils / students adopting a 'plan, do review' model where necessary/appropriate.
14. Develop and maintain links with other professionals involved with the education and support of CYPVI (e.g., QTVI, Mobility Officers for Adults, Specialist Social Workers etc.)
15. Develop and provide advice to relevant authorities regarding the Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) needs of CYPVI from the area.
16. Attend school parents' evenings or other events where the sharing of Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) information would be helpful.
17. Participate in and, on occasions, organise extra curricula activities for CYPVI as part of their Habilitation training.
18. Periodically evaluate, monitor, and report on the work of the Habilitation Service, including comparison with published Quality Standards, and use the results to inform future planning and staff deployment.
19. Periodically review the Aims and Objectives for the delivery of Habilitation Training, taking account of the outcomes specified in the 'Quality Standards –Delivery of Habilitation Training (Mobility and Independent Living Skills) for Children and Young People with Vision impairment (2011; 2021)'
20. Maintain an awareness of current thinking, research, and relevant developments in Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence), to improve and further develop service provision.
21. Undertake such other duties as may be expected within the grade and nature of the post.

22. Maintain in good standing with Continuing Professional Development activities as prescribed by Habilitation VI UK or associated Professional Bodies to maintain competence and relevance
23. Mentoring placement students as part of their Habilitation University course.

## Qualified Habilitation Assistant (QHA)

Model Job Description:

### The QHA should:

Hold a specialist year 1 certificate in the Graduate Certificate in Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (Children and Young People) or equivalent qualification which meets the learning outcomes arising from the 'Quality Standards – Delivery of Habilitation Training (Mobility and Independent Living Skills) for Children and Young People with Vision impairment (2011; 2021)': Qualification Participant Learning Outcomes.

### Job Description

As a Qualified Habilitation Assistant you will be required, **under the direction of a Qualified Habilitation Specialist (QHS)**, to assist and support the following activities:

1. Assessing and monitoring the Habilitation training needs of Children and Young People (CYPVI) who are blind or partially sighted (0-25 years).
2. Contribute to the undertaking of environmental access audits in the home, school areas and other educational settings.
3. Implementing appropriate risk management strategies.

4. Contribute to developing individual Habilitation (mobility and independence) programmes based on needs identified, in agreement with the CYPVI and/or, where appropriate, parents, caregivers and others closely involved.
5. Delivering appropriate individual Habilitation training to CYPVI in a range of settings (e.g., homes and home area, nurseries, schools, colleges).
6. Providing support in Habilitation (mobility and independence) work for CYPVI at times of transition to and between educational settings.
7. Liaising with parents, caregivers, teachers, teaching assistants, ancillary workers, and other professionals within schools (and other educational settings) regarding the Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) needs of CYPVI.
8. Maintaining detailed records of Habilitation (mobility and independence) provision for CYPVI on caseload and writing reports as appropriate.
9. Planning and delivery of training in Habilitation to staff working with CYPVI, and for peer groups of such pupils / students.
10. Linking with other professionals involved with the education and support of CYPVI (including but not exclusive to: QHS, QTVI, Mobility Officers for Adults, Specialist Social Workers).
11. Developing advice for relevant authorities regarding the Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) needs of CYPVI from the area.
12. Attending school parents' evenings or other events where the sharing of Habilitation (mobility, orientation, and independence) information would be helpful.

13. Participating in and, when required, organising extra curricula activities for CYPVI as part of their Habilitation training.
14. Participating in any review of the work of the Habilitation Service and other service development activities.
15. You will also be required to undertake such other duties as may be expected within the grade and nature of the post.



# Annex C

## Quality Standards in professional Habilitation practice

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### Introduction

These Quality Standards, in professional Habilitation practice, are designed to ensure that children and young people with vision impairment are enabled, through high quality mobility, orientation, and independence training and support, to achieve the greatest possible independence (including social and mental health outcomes) and maximise their educational outcomes and life chances.

Annex C identifies the professional attributes, knowledge and understanding that are expected from a Habilitation practitioner. These may be used to interpret and assess practitioner competence through prior experience and training.

The professional standards shown below underpin the two job roles for Habilitation Specialists identified in Section 2.0 of the Quality Standards -Delivery of Habilitation Training (Mobility and Independence Living Skills) for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment, which differentiate between the two roles on the basis that:

- The QHS can demonstrate a high level of professional competence in Habilitation work and is the lead specialist in the delivery of Habilitation training for a child or young person.

- The QHA can demonstrate a level of professional competence that allows them to work effectively under the direction of a QHS, possibly in a larger authority where there is a team of Qualified Habilitation Specialists

Annex B further specifies the knowledge, understanding and extent of practical skills expected of each role, expressed as a model job description. Habilitation professionals will need to demonstrate the following:

## **Professional attributes**

### **1.1. Relationships with children and young people and their Families**

- 1.1.1. Have high expectations of CYPVI, including a commitment that they can achieve their full potential in relation to the Children's Plan 2020/four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence (Scotland) and SHANARRI indicators. Outcomes include, social-emotional mental health needs, and their mobility and independence
- 1.1.2. Establish fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with CYPVI, and their families
- 1.1.3. Liaise effectively and work in partnership with the parents/ caregivers of CYPVI providing information, advice, and support, as appropriate

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### **1.2. Frameworks and structures**

- 1.2.1. Have a good, up-to-date working knowledge and understanding of national legislation and policy, and local policy and guidelines in relation to children and young people with sensory disabilities, notably; CYPVI, safeguarding and mental health

- 1.2.2. Understand the continuum of educational provision available for learners with VI including, mainstream schools, specialised provision, special schools, academies and free schools, other forms of schooling and the role of support services
- 1.2.3. Understand the policies and procedures set out in the SEN Code of Practice (or equivalent legislation), their implications for CYPVI, and how to put them into practice
- 1.2.4. Understand the purpose of the Common Assessment Framework (or equivalent tools) and how it is used
- 1.2.5. Understand the purpose of the Team around the Family/child (or equivalent tools) and how it is used
- 1.2.6. Understand how voluntary and advocacy agencies can help CYPVI and their parents/caregivers to make a full contribution to decisions about education and care

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### **1.3. Communicating with children and young people and their families**

- 1.3.1. Recognise the rights and expectations of CYPVI, and provide opportunities for them to make informed choices and express their views about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively
- 1.3.2. Know when and how to intervene to support CYPVI, in communication with others
- 1.3.3. Recognise the rights and expectations of the parents/caregivers of CYPVI and involve them in raising their children's achievement and improving their well-being and independence
- 1.3.4. Recognise the importance of self-advocacy and listening to the voice of the CYPVI

## **1.4. Personal professional development**

- 1.4.1. Act upon advice and feedback regarding their own professional activity and respond positively to opportunities to receive coaching or to work with a mentor
- 1.4.2. Research and critically evaluate innovative practices in relation to improving the achievement of CYPVI. Draw on research outcomes and other sources of external evidence to inform their own practice and that of colleagues
- 1.4.3. Research and utilise current technology and up to date practices to support planning, delivery, and reflection of the Habilitation programme and equip the CYPVI to use technology to access information, promoting independence
- 1.4.4. Maintain a logbook or skills matrix highlighting areas of competence and identifying learning goals/areas of continued professional development to ensure all areas of practice are covered and refreshed over a three-year period
- 1.4.5. Maintain membership and registration status with Habilitation VI UK, to gain access to quality continued professional development, access to the largest network of Habilitation professionals in the UK, online professional resources, and guidance on best practice.

## **Professional knowledge and understanding**

### **2.1. Specialist knowledge and understanding**

- 2.1.1. Understand current and emerging SEN/ASN and disability-specific terminology and how it is used in relation to the education, Habilitation and care of CYPVI
- 2.1.2. Understand the anatomy and physiology of the eye

- 2.1.3. Understand how sight develops, including the role that the brain plays in vision
  - 2.1.4. Have a working knowledge of the physics of light and how the human visual system responds to light
  - 2.1.5. Understand the range of vision impairments (ocular and cerebral) and how they are identified
  - 2.1.6. Understand the effects of growth and development on sight loss and its management
  - 2.1.7. Understand the significance of motor and sensory development from pre to post birth, through development and how motor and sensory interactions may inform personal movement in relation to a range of visual needs
  - 2.1.8. Know the functional implications of the pathology and treatment of eye diseases and conditions
  - 2.1.9. Understand the principles of good lighting design and know a range of resources and techniques that can be used to provide appropriate and effective lighting for CYPVI in a range of settings
  - 2.1.10. Understand the principles of good design in terms of colour, contrast, and clutter and how these features can be used to support the habilitation skills of CYPVI.
  - 2.1.11. Understanding and knowledge on the effective use of technology for independent living
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### Optometry

- 2.1.10. Know the theory and application of current optometric practice and protocols as they relate to ocular and cerebral vision impairment

- 2.1.11. Know the importance of assessing how CYPVI process visual information
  - 2.1.12. Know the strengths and limitations of different forms of optometric assessment
  - 2.1.13. Know the principles of assessing functional vision in general and specifically for habilitation work, including how appropriate communication strategies can enhance this
  - 2.1.14. In liaison with an optometrist or QTVI, know the range of available low-vision devices and how to use them appropriately and effectively in different light conditions to minimise the adverse effects of sight loss on mobility and independence
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### **Working with vision impairment**

- 2.1.15. Know how low-vision appliances help a child or young person make effective use of functional vision in environmental navigation and exploration
- 2.1.16. Understand and take account of the health and safety implications of using specialist equipment and technologies.
- 2.1.17. Know how to respond to a child or young person's level of expressive and receptive language, using the most appropriate mode of communication, including using additional auditory and tactile methods to support their independence and self esteem
- 2.1.18. Understand the principles underlying the development of augmentative and alternative communication systems, including Braille and how to apply them appropriately in the development of mobility and independence skills, building on pupils' strengths

- 2.1.19. Maintain an awareness of cultural differences, especially where English is an additional language
  - 2.1.20. Understand how an increased reliance on haptic perception affects learning and development
  - 2.1.21. Know the importance of a range of sensory inputs such as taste and smell
- 

### **Habilitation**

- 2.1.22. Understand the principles and practice of habilitation (mobility, orientation, independent living, and self-agency) and how access to these services impacts on the daily lives of CYPVI
- 

### **Mental Health & the Impact of sight loss**

- 2.1.23. Understand the impact of profound, progressive, or sudden loss of sight on the cognitive, emotional, and social development of CYPVI
- 2.1.24. Understand how to support the child or young person and those around them in such a way, as to promote confidence, independence, and self-determination
- 2.1.25. Understand the impact of exceptionally high or low cognitive ability in conjunction with sight loss on the development of mobility, orientation, and independence skills
- 2.1.26. Have good and up to date working knowledge of current mental health legislation
- 2.1.27. Understand the changing brain in young people with vision impairment during early years and in teenage years and the social, emotional, physical, and psychological impact this can have on their wellbeing

- 2.1.28. Understand the principles that underpin positive mental health in young people and the five basic steps in a mental health first aid action plan
  - 2.1.29. Know the strategies associated with the 7 Cs of resilience (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Contribution, Coping, Control) which form the building blocks to positive mental health
  - 2.1.30. Understand the impact of vision impairment on forming and maintaining relationships with sibling, peers, and family. The emotional and well-being issues related to isolation and recognition of difficulties having a vision impairment can have on forming relationships).
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## **2.3. Safeguarding**

- 2.3.1. Have good up to date on working knowledge of current safeguarding legislation affecting children with SEND/ASN
  - 2.3.2. Know the local safeguarding legislation guidelines, the service roles & responsibilities, the protocol and reporting structure the QHS/QHA will adopt within their service delivery
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## **2.2. Specialist skills**

- 2.2.1. Have a minimum competence in Grade I Braille
- 2.2.2. Make effective use of specialised informal and formal assessment techniques, including the sensitive and focused use of observation, supported by developmental scales and specialist habilitation checklists or assessment tools

- 2.2.3. In collaboration with a QTVI, contribute to assessing the functional vision of CYPVI and interpret optometric information in relation to mobility, orientation, and independence (habilitation) in a range of contexts and environments
- 2.2.4. Understand the roles and responsibilities of the range of specialist services and agencies that work with learners with VI and their families
- 2.2.5. Use specialised assessment information, including that provided by colleagues from other specialist disciplines, to inform assessments
- 2.2.6. Anticipate the barriers to personal agency and participation that may arise for CYPVI, and guarantee opportunities are available to develop a full range of habilitation skills, by ensuring these are integrated into programme planning and delivery
- 2.2.7. Encourage learners with VI to monitor and understand their own behaviour and to persevere with their learning when difficulties arise during habilitation work
- 2.2.8. Know how to promote knowledge and skills related to personal, social and health education, in the context of developing independence in accessing information and advice
- 2.2.9. Use information gained from parents/caregivers and advice from specialist professionals or services to inform and plan suitable programmes of habilitation skills training and to organise provision in such a way as to ensure a coherent and consistent approach
- 2.2.10. Initiate or contribute to a review cycle that includes outcome setting, with specific criteria against which, progress can be evaluated, and new outcomes established

- 2.2.11. Contribute to transition planning to ensure that transfer from one setting/school to another is as smooth as possible for learners with VI
  - 2.2.12. Use specialised aids and techniques such as echolocation to support mobility and independence
- 

### **2.3. Habilitation Training with children and young people**

- 2.3.1. Design, implement and monitor programmes of Habilitation (mobility, orientation, independent living skills, self-determination skills)
- 2.3.2. Use specialised equipment and devices to support the mobility and independence of learners with VI.
- 2.3.3. Implement and evaluate a range of approaches to help children and young people with vision impairment and blindness to achieve specific learning outcomes
- 2.3.4. Select and use the most effective approaches, e.g., visual, oral/aural, tactile, and kinaesthetic to enhance independence
- 2.3.5. Design and produce training and learning materials in an appropriate medium, e.g., audio, tactile maps, Braille, enlarged and modified text, simplified diagrams
- 2.3.6. Provide a wide range of actual and simulated opportunities for the development of an understanding of daily living and self-care
- 2.3.7. Encourage learners with vision impairment or blindness to use their mobility and independence skills to promote organisational, information processing, problem solving and thinking skills

- 2.3.8. Recognise and facilitate opportunities for learners with vision impairment or blindness to make friends and access a wide range of sport and leisure pursuits
  - 2.3.9. Encourage children and young people with blindness and/or partial sight to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and the use of specialist equipment, by actively involving them in decision making relative to type and level of support they need and receive
- 

## **2.4. Assessing, monitoring, and giving feedback**

- 2.4.1. Use a range of effective approaches, strategies, and toolkit of resources to monitor the progress of children and young people with partial sight or blindness in home, public and educational contexts
- 2.4.2. Ensure learners with vision impairment or blindness and their families, understand, and remain fully involved in the setting, monitoring and evaluation of all outcomes
- 2.4.3. Provide realistic feedback which supports the independence of CYPVI
- 2.4.4. Prepare and write accurate assessment reports that can be understood and used by CYPVI, teachers, other professionals, and parents/carers according to the audience for the report



## Quality Standards

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### Preamble:

Habilitation professionals work within education support services to provide orientation, mobility and independent living skill training to children and young people with ocular and/or cerebral vision impairment (CYPVI) from birth to 25 years. Through high quality direct training within an extended curriculum across mainstream and specialist schools, Habilitation Professionals strive to ensure that CYPVI have the same opportunities to learn the skills necessary to lead fulfilling lives. Habilitation professionals act with honesty and integrity, have strong specialist knowledge and skills to foster positive partnerships with CYPVI, their families and the multidisciplinary team with the best interests of the CYPVI in mind.

### Part One: habilitation teaching and delivery

A habilitation professional must:

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#### 1. Set high aspirations and motivation for each CYPVI

- Set goals to achieve the maximum degree of independent living
- Set goals to achieve the maximum degree of independent travel and mobility
- Be aware of the pupil's emotional well-being, including self-determination
- Set goals to achieve the maximum degree of social inclusion
- Be accountable and demonstrate competency in the use of any specialist Habilitation tools such as aids to mobility and independence

- Be accountable to be able to assess risks and anticipate likely areas of personal difficulty in mobility and independent living
- 

## **2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils**

- Ensure that all CYPVI have equality of access to Habilitation skill support from professionals with appropriate qualifications and experience
- Ensure the QHS/QHA work collaboratively with other agencies, including health, education, social services, career and work guidance services, and voluntary agencies
- Develop the skills of parents and professionals involved to enable them to be effective partners in the delivery of the Habilitation skills programme
- Regularly monitor and evaluate pupil progress and achievements
- Incorporate, as appropriate, training for the young person and those around them in the use of Habilitation tools
- Be accountable to parents, pupils, schools, and the LA
- Respect and value diversity and cultural difference
- Demonstrate a secure knowledge of the relevant
- Habilitation curriculum and foster the pupils' interest, motivation to understand the relevancy of the subject
- Communicate effectively with the young person regarding the nature and purpose of the strategies and activities being undertaken, taking account of their communicative and linguistic competence

### **3. Plan and teach appropriate age and stage structured lessons**

- Work collaboratively with the young person in monitoring and recording progress in the development of their Habilitation skills
- Enable and encourage pupils with VI and their parents to be as fully involved as possible in the planning, implementation, and review process of the Habilitation training programme
- Use an understanding of typical child development to inform the observation, identification and recording of the Habilitation skills needs of the CYPVI
- Take account of any additional sensory, physical, or learning needs
- Incorporate, as appropriate, training for the young person and those around them in making risk assessments, auditing their access within the environment, and developing related risk management strategies.
- Select and use the most effective approaches, e.g., visual, oral/ aural, tactile and kinaesthetic to enhance independence
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning

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### **4. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and need of all CYPVI**

- Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils ability to learn, and how best to overcome these

- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social, and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
  - have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, their eye conditions and additional learning needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with additional disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to know how best to support them
- 

## **5. Make accurate and effective use of assessment**

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
  - make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
  - use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
  - give pupils regular feedback, e.g., orally/aurally and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.
- 

## **6. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities**

- make a positive contribution to the relevant team/sensory service
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents regarding pupils' achievements and well-being.

## Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

- A QHS/QHA is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout
- QHS/QHA uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within their respective service by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, always observing proper boundaries appropriate to a QHS/QHA professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- A QHS/QHA must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of the sensory service in which they are employed and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- A QHS/QHA must understand, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities

The Habilitation Specialist Standards can be found on the Habilitation VI UK website: [www.habilitationviuk.co.uk](http://www.habilitationviuk.co.uk)

The Quality Standards 2nd Edition are revised and updated from the original version authored by Dr Olga Miller, Dr Karl Wall, and Dr Malcom Garner (2011). The Standards continue to support the aspirations of the children and young people who have a vision impairment and promote best practice. It is hoped the Standards will be used to:

- Increase equity of access to mobility and independence training across the UK
- To help raise awareness of the important role played by those individuals who work in the field of habilitation
- To inform commissioning groups of the need for habilitation services
- Support the investment of Qualified Habilitation Specialists across the UK

We would like to give thanks to those organisations and individuals who contributed to the standards, this was a collaborative project. With especial thanks to the HAB VI UK executive, to Torfaen Vision Impairment Service, the Scottish Sensory Centre, to Guide Dogs for helping to update the standards which represent the modern profession. Particular thanks to RNIB who have published the Standards. And a huge thank you to the HAB VI UK membership, whose continued support has allowed us to complete this project.

*Angela Wood Chair of Habilitation VI UK  
and Dr Jessica Hayton UCL*



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Maximising mobility and independence skills of children and young people with visual impairments.