



RWPN Habilitation Qualification Policy

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to state what qualifications RWPN will accept to join its professional register of practitioners, either as a Qualified Habilitation Specialist or a dual qualified Vision Rehabilitation Specialist/Qualified Habilitation Specialist.

Habilitation is not Rehabilitation

[Habilitation](#) is a distinct and highly skilled occupation. Working with children and young people requires a different skills and knowledge from rehabilitation. Furthermore, the context in which habilitation is legislated and delivered can be very different from that in which work with adults is undertaken. It is vital that employers, professionals and the public should consider habilitation in this way.

RWPN-recognised qualification routes

It is vital that Qualified Habilitation Specialists are trained appropriately for the role. RWPN recognises [two current qualification routes](#) to work with children and young people. These programmes of study are the only courses now available that equip professionals with the skills and knowledge required to work with visually impaired children and young people.

RWPN also recognises a previous qualification – the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) Working with Children and Young People with a Visual Impairment. This course enabled Vision Rehabilitation Specialists, for the first time, to train specifically to work with children and young people.

In exceptional situations RWPN will consider acceptance on our register where a long-standing rehabilitation-trained professional has been working with children and young people for a lengthy period of time. This would be on a case-by-case basis and will only be permitted where the professional has been continually employed in a setting with children and young people and did so prior to bespoke qualifications being

available. In such cases RWPN would require a portfolio of evidence to be provided which would be assessed by a Qualified Habilitation Specialist. RWPN would also support the professional in request their employer that they be given the opportunity to join a current Habilitation course or complete additional level 6 modules on the BCU top-up degree course.

Furthermore, we expect that, should a professional in this situation wish to leave their current employer, a new employer would support them to undertake the top-up degree. This expectation would not apply to a professional with the ACE qualification, which should be accepted valid.

July 2023