

# Support work in schools (swis) qualifications

Flexible and tailored awards, certificates and diplomas

building a brighter  
future **for school  
support staff**



*developing people, improving young lives*

# Gaining skills, raising standards

Everyone who works in a school has a part to play in raising standards and giving children a better start in life.

If you're one of the 500,000-plus school support staff, the SWiS (support work in schools) qualifications could help you do your job more effectively and give you a nationally recognised award, certificate or diploma.



## Who are the SWiS qualifications for ?

The qualifications are suitable for school support staff in a wide range of roles – whether you work in administration, catering, technical support, site maintenance, or you support learning inside or outside the classroom. They are especially suitable if you:

- have one or more roles in school
- would like to gain a formal qualification
- want to develop your knowledge
- would like to broaden your skills
- want to develop your career.



## How will the qualifications help me ?

The SWiS programme will build on your existing skills and experience and fill any gaps in your knowledge. What's more, you'll gain a nationally recognised qualification at level 2 or level 3, accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The SWiS programme can also provide a stepping stone to more specialist qualifications, such as national vocational qualifications (NVQs).

## What will I cover in the programme ?

Each level includes at least two mandatory units. One unit explores the school environment as a place to work – school values and policies, and the roles and responsibilities of the people who work there. The other unit is designed to help you respond effectively to the needs of children and young people, focusing on how you can contribute to pupils' development and well-being.

You can also choose one or more optional units to tailor the qualifications to your role and to the needs of your school. There's a wide range of units to support your work in a variety of areas, including:

administration

learning support

pupil support

catering

site maintenance

specialist and technical.

You'll find the SWiS qualifications very flexible, and you'll receive support from a mentor while you undertake your training.

## Is there funding to help me ?

The TDA now funds the SWiS qualifications. Further information about funding arrangements is available from your local authority or on the TDA website: [www.tda.gov.uk/SWiS](http://www.tda.gov.uk/SWiS)



# Which qualification is right for me ?

## level 2 qualifications

The level 2 qualifications are designed for school support staff who work either in single or multiple roles. You can take an award or certificate programme:

Level 2 **award** = two mandatory units and one optional unit

Level 2 **certificate** = two mandatory units and two optional units

As well as recognising your existing skills and helping you develop new ones, the level 2 qualifications can help you on your way to SWiS level 3 or to an NVQ.

## level 3 qualifications

The level 3 qualifications will suit support staff whose role requires them to show considerable responsibility or independence. They are also suitable for people who are new to working in a school but already have qualifications or expertise in a particular area, such as finance or catering. You can take an award, certificate or diploma programme:

Level 3 **award** = two mandatory units

Level 3 **certificate** = two mandatory units and two optional units

Level 3 **diploma** = two mandatory units and four optional units

# What about training and assessment ?

Wherever possible, training and assessment will take place at your school or locally to minimise disruption to your workload and to the school day.

With help from your school, you'll decide on the optional units you want to take and agree a training plan. Assessment might include keeping a personal log of aspects of your work, producing evidence of your skills or understanding, or inviting your training mentor or someone who knows your work well to provide a supporting statement.

The SWiS qualifications give support staff the opportunity to develop their skills and gain personal satisfaction.



**“The qualification** made us more aware of what we can achieve with children in the limited time we have with them.”

School midday supervisor



“My support staff have proved that **this flexible training meets their needs** and those of the school. Their increased skills and confidence have had a direct impact on the children’s learning in our school and it demonstrates to the children that you never stop learning.”

Headteacher



**“This is the first time** I have ever achieved a qualification. It has made a real difference to how I think about my work in school and how we work as a team.”

Learning mentor



**“I really enjoyed training** with colleagues from other schools. We are keeping in touch and developing new ideas together.”

School caretaker



## Find out more

For more information about the support work in schools (SWiS) qualifications, including mandatory and optional units, funding, training and assessment, contact your local authority or visit the TDA website:

**[www.tda.gov.uk/SWiS](http://www.tda.gov.uk/SWiS)**

Alternatively contact the Skills4schools enquiry line:

**t 0845 6002944**

**e [info@skills4schools.org.uk](mailto:info@skills4schools.org.uk)**

The TDA is committed to providing accessible information. To request this item in another language or format, contact **TDA corporate communications** at the address below or e-mail: [corporatecomms@tda.gov.uk](mailto:corporatecomms@tda.gov.uk) Please tell us what you require and we will consider with you how to meet your needs.

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