A key principle of appropriate delegation is that the person who is delegated to has the competency to undertake the task. (See [Delegation guidance](https://www.rcslt.org/members/delivering-quality-services/delegation/delegation-guidance/#section-1))

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| 1. **What is competence?**
 | * An individual's ability to effectively apply knowledge, understanding, skills and values within a designated scope of practice
* Evidenced in practice by the effective performance of the specific role and its related responsibilities
* Involves individuals in critical reflection about, and modification of, their practice

Capability is a step further than competence. It relates to the individual's full range of potential and may go beyond their current scope of practice. See [All Wales Guidance on delegation](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/bcupinnacle/document/244204) for more information. |
| 1. **How to assess competence**
 | The registered practitioner needs to:* have an awareness and knowledge of the education, training and qualifications the person has undertaken.
* know whether the person has competently performed particular tasks in the past.
* know what further training is required prior to delegation taking place.

Competency can be assessed through externally assessed qualifications and/or internal competency frameworks. These may be generic qualifications relevant to all support workers in a particular situation or profession specific. It is important that both the registered practitioners responsible for managing and supervising and the SLT assistants\* themselves should:* be aware of the various options available
* understand their intended outcomes
* recognise the amount of time commitment required.

For a useful explanation please see the [Well Qualified Workforce interactive leaflet](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/422275/well_qualified_workforce_leaflet_interactive.pdf)This knowledge will assist in:* drawing up job descriptions
* recruiting staff
* working jointly with support staff to identify training which will benefit both them and service delivery, and best meet their personal learning style.

This can be particular important when training budget resources are tight and clinical responsibilities make it difficult to allocate protected time for both training and supervision.  |
| 1. **Education and training**
 | Education and training can be supported through: * A systematic approach to the training and development of support workers.
* Planned orientation, induction and support programme for newly employed support workers and those moving into new clinical areas. In Scotland there are the [14 Mandatory Induction Standards](http://www.supportworkercentral.nes.scot.nhs.uk/learning/mandatory-induction-standards/) and in England [the Care Certificate](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Learning-development/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate.aspx) both of which are to be worked through in the first 6 months of employment.
* Training provided and updated where specialist skills are required.
* A system of monitoring support worker ability through performance review, appraisal and personal development planning using tools relevant to the organisational setting e.g. KSF for health service workers.
* Access to continuing development opportunities.
* Demonstrating that support workers are keeping clinically up- to-date e.g. participation in personal development planning and monitoring, clinical excellence networks (CENs), and clinical supervision.

**In house programme** In addition to the Mandatory Induction Standards different localities take different approaches to the development of competencies for new and existing staff. **Informal learning** Some services use carefully managed informal learning opportunities with agreed measurable learning outcomes and planned activities such as work shadowing or self-supported learning. **Formal qualifications** There are a range of formal qualification available. For example: National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications which are national awards that acknowledge an individual’s work-based skills and may prove useful when considering the issues of competence and delegation. Some employers require certain qualifications for certain jobs whilst others will recognise an appropriate equivalent level of experience. [NHS Education for Scotland support workers hub](http://www.supportworkercentral.nes.scot.nhs.uk/) has useful information about the different types of education and training available.  |
| 1. **Service user safety and quality of service**
 | Continual professional development (CPD) for SLT assistants\* is essential to service user safety and quality of service. See [Cavendish Review of healthcare assistants and support workers in NHS and social care](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236212/Cavendish_Review.pdf) 2013. |

\*A variety of job titles are used depending upon the locality. The term support worker is used here to include these terms e.g. SLT assistant, assistant practitioner, reablement worker, health care support worker, technical assistant.