



26 February 2009

Dear Colleague

SOUTH OF ENGLAND ADVOCACY PROJECTS AND KATE MERCER TRAINING TO DELIVER ADVOCACY QUALIFICATIONS THROUGH CITY AND GUILDS

We are delighted to hear that the long awaited Certificate and Diploma in Independent Advocacy have been formally approved by QCA, and to signpost you to our new and improved Advocacy Training website.

The new qualifications, accredited by City and Guilds, will help ensure that people who use advocacy services continue to receive the highest quality service possible, and will contribute towards consistency within advocacy across England and Wales. It is likely that Commissioners of advocacy services will increasingly expect providers to be able to evidence that their staff have, or are working towards, the qualifications.

Drawing on their vast experience and solid reputations in the advocacy field, South of England Advocacy Projects and Kate Mercer Training have formed a joint enterprise to bring you the Certificate in Independent Advocacy training. We would be delighted to support you through your journey in achieving the qualification.

By choosing us as your training provider you can expect:

- Support from qualified assessors
- 2 tutors delivering the taught sessions which accompany the qualification
- Service user involvement – particularly within taught sessions
- Individual training material
- On the job assessment
- Registration and final certification from City and Guilds
- Support from registration to completion
- Relevant and practice based training
- Acknowledgement and development of your expertise and skill set

The qualifications are aimed at both individuals who provide specialist advocacy support and those who use advocacy skills as part of their everyday work including social workers, health professionals and carers. Learners can achieve a Certificate in Independent Advocacy by completing all 4 core units PLUS one optional specialist unit. To achieve a Diploma, learners need to successfully complete the 4 core units PLUS IMCA and IMCA DOLS.

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We have been working hard with City and Guilds since January to get ready for the qualifications and are beginning to run courses from this month. Although our first IMHA course in London is now sold out our courses are held at various venues throughout the country so we have arranged for 2 more to run during March in Basingstoke and Plymouth. Following requests to run more courses deeper into the South West, we have added a number of dates in Devon to our course calendar.

Our courses will meet the needs of a wide variety of organisations and include a mix of attendees. A large number of the training team are experienced trainers who have also worked as advocates, others are experienced advocacy managers and others are people who have used services and become recognised trainers in their own right – this powerful combination means you will receive from people who have walked the challenges of advocacy and are able to use their experience to support you with your learning and development. We passionately believe in service user involvement so as well as those directly delivering training as co-tutors on some courses, we have actively recruited and trained a pool of service users who will co-deliver other aspects of your training, and contribute their own experiences of receiving advocacy and health/social care services, bringing a unique dynamic to all of our courses.

We have deliberately kept our costs down as we understand that the majority of learners will come from the voluntary sector where training budgets are tight. Our costs do, however, reflect the amount of time involved in providing quality assessment and support and in meaningfully involving service users as part of the training team.

Be part of something special and join us today!

Courses are filling up so we recommend booking NOW!

For further information and to book please go to www.advocacytraining.org.uk or call South of England Advocacy Projects on 01424-718075.

South of England Advocacy Projects – has many years experience in providing advocacy services for and with a wide variety of client groups and has been centrally involved in the development and delivery of advocacy training programmes since its inception in 1994.

Kate Mercer Training – Kate is an experienced and qualified trainer who has developed and delivered a number of practical and effective training courses in advocacy and rights. Between 2006 and 2008 she worked for CSIP as the lead responsible for the development of qualifications in independent advocacy and has unique insight into the assessment and teaching of the courses.