

SOCIAL CARE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

*Learning
matters*

Qualifying and post-qualifying



Introduction

This booklet explains the provision for qualifying and post qualifying training for social workers. Training and Development Services provide training and development opportunities for employees in both Adults' Services and Children and Young People's Services (which together we refer to as social care services).

The need to recruit and retain social workers and promote good practice and continual professional development is also a significant part of this. Our aim is:

- to help social care services to have enough social workers, including those with post qualification awards, to meet national and our targets as well as ensuring professional and safe practice.
- to continue to sponsor social care services' employees on to qualifying training courses each year. As a result of this newly qualified professionals re-join the workforce every year.
- to find sufficient practice placements for qualifying students.
- to manage a range of post qualifying courses and activities, for staff in Adult Services and Children & Young People's Services.
- to participate in the local development of the revised PQ Framework initiated by the General Social Care Council (GSCC).
- to develop initiatives to help recruit, retain and develop social workers; and
- we have successfully started a Practice Assessor's course, validated at the University of Chichester.

Do you want to be a social worker?

There are a number of routes to follow for people who want to become a social worker (see www.gsc.org.uk). A good starting point is to work in a social care role, such as an Assistant Care Manager or by doing voluntary work (see www.westsussex.gov.uk). Social care services staff would then follow a training pathway which would include induction and foundation courses.

West Sussex staff who are interested in doing a BA in Social Work, and wanting sponsorship, need to do a preliminary course or have NVQ 4. The course is the **Certificate of Introduction to Social Work**, based at the University of Chichester. It is run by our Training & Development Services, and is made up of two modules on level 1 of the BA in Social Work at the University of Chichester. As well as being a separate Certificate of Higher Education, it will also give you an advantage on the first level of the BA in Social Work at the University of Chichester, University of Sussex and the University of Brighton.

Qualifying training and sponsorship

Sponsorship refers to the training offered to a member of staff who undertakes a qualifying course while in their post and on their salary. Applicants are selected by interview.

Every year we sponsor staff onto qualifying training courses. We have arrangements with local universities to facilitate this.

There has been a long-standing primary partnership with the BA in Social Work course at the University of Chichester. We work with tutors at the University to help deliver the course. We are involved in the selection, planning, teaching, assessment (both academic and practice), quality assurance and developing service user involvement.

Sponsorship is now also available on the BA in Social Work course based jointly at the University of Sussex and University of Brighton.

Sponsorship is also available on the MSc in Social Work at the University of Brighton and the MA in Social Work at the University of Sussex.

Members of staff who have a first degree to a 2.2 standard can apply for these Masters courses and qualify in two years, compared to three years for the BA in Social Work courses

Sponsorship has the benefit of developing and allowing you to progress while you work. We manage the sponsorship process that

involves arranging interviews, liaising with universities and offering support to staff and managers throughout the course.

Practice assessing

The Graduate Certificate in Practice Assessing course is based at the University of Chichester, and has candidates on it from social care services. Successful completion gives you academic credits and contributes to your Post Qualifying Social Work Award. Our Training and Development Officers run this course and do all the teaching, practice assessing and marking. This course has always been well evaluated. The course candidates practice assess a student on a BA in Social Work or Masters in Social Work course placement. Places on the course are available to the voluntary, independent and private Sectors.

The course starts in September and lasts for nine months. The candidate have a qualifying student placed with them during the course.

We continue to give support to existing Practice Assessors. We also look to ways to re-engage with inactive Practice Assessors and help them to take up the role again.

Provision and development of practice placements

We find and maintain all of the West Sussex placements used by students on qualifying training courses. We work with our university partners to provide an agreed number of practice placements for each course. This is an important activity as it helps us to recruit and retain qualified social workers. Students who have a good experience in a placement often then apply for a vacant post in the same establishment or service. The provision of practice placements also gives us evidence for Government targets, and helps West Sussex County Council to be a 'learning organisation'. Social workers involved

in practice assessment can use this as evidence towards re-registration with the General Social Care Council.

We offer 80, 100 & 120 days practice placements to qualifying courses. These usually run from September to May. If you are a Practice Teacher or Assessor, or can offer a placement opportunity, we would like to hear from you.

We also provide observation placements at level 1 for the BA in Social Work and Masters in Social Work qualifying courses. This crucial role ensures safety to practice before students go on their two assessed practice placements. These brief placements of up to 8 days duration are needed in September and January each year. Please contact us if you can offer us an observation placement.

Recruitment and retention

We can offer bursaries to direct-entry final year students on the BA in Social Work and Masters in Social Work courses. The intention is to attract the best students to work for West Sussex when they qualify as Social Workers.

Returning to social work course

We are aware of Social Workers who have had career breaks and who are interested in returning to work, for example, parents who have raised children. However, some of these potential staff can feel inhibited by a lack of confidence and awareness of current knowledge, for example, about legislation, policies, procedures (such as protection, risk management, and care management) and current work practices. We provide training that will re-engage these workers and encourage them to apply for posts in social care services in West Sussex. We have developed a course for 'social worker returnees', which involves four days of training and four days 'shadowing' a practising Social Worker.

Post-qualifying awards and development

Significant numbers of employees each year take Post Qualifying modules. This has helped West Sussex County Council to be a prominent provider of Post Qualifying training for its staff - new employees often mention this as an incentive to work for West Sussex social care services. Post Qualifying training is also important in terms of continual professional development, pay and progression and is a good way of providing evidence for GSCC re-registration.

A consolidation of competence course, called the Post-qualifying Year (PQ1), is mandatory for all newly qualified staff. Adults' Services staff can then go on to complete the Post Qualifying Social Work Award (PQSW). We offer a range of courses to complete the competencies PQ 2-6.

Adults' Services social workers who have PQ1 and want to do mental health assessments can participate in the Approved Social Worker course to achieve this. Successful completion gives you the Mental Health Social Work Award (MHSWA) and the competencies PQ 2-5.

Children and Young People's Services staff who have PQ1 can then progress to complete the Post Qualifying Child Care Award (PQCCA) course. The Department of Health expect all social workers engaged in complex childcare work to get this award. It is a chance to update your skills and experience, access theory and research, and reflect on practice. Successful completion of the PQCCA gives you a complete PQ Award.

The higher level Advanced Award in Social Work is also available.

Management awards

Skills for Care require all managers within the care sector to have a management qualification at Level 4 or above. Internally we provide management courses at NVQ 3, 4 and 5 and specific postgraduate certificate modules. We also work with a range of university partners to provide development at Foundation and Masters degree level.

Future developments

The General Social Care Council will implement a revised Post Qualifying Framework in 2008. We are now involved in developing the new range of Post-qualifying provision with local universities in the Surrey and Sussex regions.

This process will require partnership arrangements with other agencies and the commissioning of programmes from universities. We are now working closely with the University of Chichester, as well as other universities.

We also need to make sure that as many Adults' Services and Children and Young People's Services social workers as possible complete their Post-qualifying Social Work Awards before 2008. Our courses and arrangements will continue to try to achieve this.

Summary

We will continue to focus on increasing the numbers of qualified social workers who work for West Sussex County Council, provide quality placement for BA in Social Work and Masters in Social Work programmes, develop practice learning opportunities and provide Post-qualifying training and assessment.

Where can I find a full list of courses?

Our training calendar, on CD-Rom, via a link on the WSCC website, on the intranet and, if you work for WSCC, on the weekly broadcast email.

For training and development in other areas see the booklets on:

- Adults' Services
- Care, Health and Wellbeing
- Staff working with children and young people
- NVQ and assessment services
- Qualifying and post-qualifying
- Support Services training and career pathways

If you need to discuss these opportunities, or for copies of the above, please contact:

- **Training and Development Section**

North Lodge

Tower Street

Chichester

West Sussex

PO19 1QT

Phone: 01243 756834

Email: traininganddevelopment@westsussex.gov.uk