

# **THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL**

## **Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland**

**2005**

December 2005

# **RULES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN SCOTLAND**

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## **PREAMBLE**

### **The Scottish Social Services Council**

The Scottish Social Services Council is a statutory body established by the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. The main purpose of the Council is to regulate the social service workforce and their education and training. The aim of the Council is to provide protection to those who use services, promote high standards of conduct and practice among social service workers, strengthen and support the professionalism of the workforce and promote confidence in the sector.

The Council has a remit covering Scotland, but also works closely with the General Social Care Council, Northern Ireland Social Care Council and the Care Council for Wales, each of which has similar responsibilities and functions.

### **The Scottish Social Services Council 'Continuing Professional Development for the Social Service Workforce'**

The Council set out its vision of a competent, confident workforce in a document entitled 'Continuing Professional Development for the Social Service Workforce' which was published in 2004. The Rules and Requirements that follow relate only to specialist training that is provided by way of an approved course and the Council wishes to stress that Continuing Professional Development will not be limited to these courses.

### **The Scottish Social Services Council 'Rules for Social Work Training 2003'**

The Rules for Social Work Training 2003 set out the arrangements for the approval, monitoring and inspection of social work degree courses.

### **Quality assurance and enhancement**

The Council will publish further details of its arrangements for the approval, monitoring, review, investigation and withdrawal of approval of courses.

### **Post Qualifying and Advanced Awards; Practice Teaching and Mental Health Social Work Awards**

The Scottish Social Services Council Rules for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005 do not apply to courses approved in terms of the documents entitled Assuring Quality for Post Qualifying Education and Training – 1: Requirements for the Post Qualifying and Advanced Awards in Social Work, CCETSW (1997) or Assuring Quality for Practice Teaching, CCETSW (1998) or Assuring Quality for Mental Health Social Work, CCETSW (2000).

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# **SECTION ONE – RULES FOR SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN SCOTLAND 2005**

## **Part I - Introduction**

### **1. Title and commencement**

- 1.1 These Rules may be cited as The Scottish Social Services Council Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers 2005 and shall come into operation on the date they are signed on behalf of the Council and are hereinafter referred to as “the Rules”.

### **2. Authority**

- 2.1 Part 3 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 established the Council on 1 October 2001.
- 2.2 The Act requires the Council to promote high standards of conduct and practice among social service workers and high standards in their education and training.
- 2.3 This is to be achieved through:
- (a) the registration of social service workers
  - (b) the development of standards of conduct and practice and the issue of Codes of Practice for social service workers and their employers
  - (c) the investigation of complaints of misconduct and, where necessary, suspending registration, removing individuals from the register, or altering their registration
  - (d) the promotion of education and training for persons wishing to become social workers and social service workers
  - (e) the approval of courses
- 2.4 The Act gives wide powers to the Council to promote education and training and to approve courses with the intention of ensuring the consistency and quality of the education and to secure or provide appropriate training when this is not, in the opinion of the Council, already being made available.
- 2.5 The Scottish Social Services Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 57 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, hereby makes the following Rules.

- 2.6 The Rules contribute to the Council's role in regulating the social service workforce. They set out the arrangements for approving specialist courses for persons who are social service workers. They are written in a way that is consistent with the Council's Rules for Social Work Training 2003.

### **3. General Statement**

- 3.1 Specialist courses that the Council approves will be for social service workers only. Parts of a course may be accessed by other students but they will not achieve the same award. This will be reflected by the entry requirements, content of the course and the name of the award. This is because the Council can only approve courses for social workers and other social service workers who are currently eligible for registration in terms of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 section 44.

### **4. Interpretation**

- 4.1 In the Rules and Requirements, unless the context otherwise requires -

'Act' means the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

'Approved Specialist Course' means a course of training or learning leading to an award at SCQF level 7 or above, for persons who are Social Service Workers, as defined in Section 77 (1) of the Act, and approved by the Council under Section 54 (1) of the Act

'Complaints Procedure: Approved Education and Training Provision' means the procedure published from time to time by the Council which deals with any complaints made to the Council concerning an approved course

'Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers' means the code of practice laying down standards of conduct and practice expected of employers or persons seeking to employ Social Service Workers published by the Council in 2002 under section 53(1)(b) of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

'Code of Practice for Social Service Workers' means the code of practice laying down the standards of conduct and practice expected of Social Service Workers published by the Council in 2002 under section 53(1)(a) of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

'Council' means the Scottish Social Services Council

'Course Provider' means a Further Education Institution or Higher Education Institution or learning centre which provides or proposes to provide a course that is designed to meet the Criteria for the approval of courses set out in Rule 6, or on whose behalf a course is provided in terms of a franchising agreement

'Course Provision' means the delivery of an approved course by a Course Provider, or on behalf of a Course Provider

'Criteria' means the Criteria for the approval of courses set out in Rule 8

'Currently eligible for registration' means that the worker is in a category for whom a part of the register has been opened in terms of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 section 44.

'External Examiner' means a person who is independent and impartial and who is contracted by a Course Provider or awarding body to provide informed comment on the standards set for approved courses and student/candidate achievement in relation to those standards

'Form of Agreement' means the formal undertaking by the Course Provider that it will comply with the Rules

'Franchising' is the process by which a Course Provider agrees to authorise the provision of the whole or part of one or more of its own courses, by a partner organisation. In doing so the Course Provider retains overall responsibility for the course's content, delivery assessment and quality assurance arrangements

'Investigation' means investigation of specialist courses approved by the Council, in accordance with the arrangements detailed in Rules 16 and 17

'Officer of the Council' means the Council's Head of Learning and Development or any other officer appointed for the purpose by the Council's Chief Executive

'Practice Learning Opportunity' means a learning experience that is structured so as to enable a student to meet practice learning objectives

'Register' means the Register maintained by the Scottish Social Services Council under section 44 of the Act, and registration shall be construed accordingly. The Register is divided into Parts covering different descriptions of Social Service Workers

'Review Report' is the report produced by the Council following its participation in the Course Provider's own subject review or following a Council-led review of approved Course Provision

'Rules' means 'The Scottish Social Services Council Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers 2005'



'Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework' ('the SCQF') means the framework developed in 2001, as amended from time to time, to enable employers, learners and the public in general to understand the full range of Scottish qualifications, how they relate to each other, and how different types of qualifications can contribute to improving the skills of the workforce. It clarifies entry and exit points and routes for progression within and across education and training sectors and maximises opportunities for credit transfer

'Social Service Worker' has the meaning given by Section 77(1) of the Act and includes social workers, Care Commission Officers and other Social Service Workers employed in the provision of (or in managing the provision of) a care service

'Social Service Provider Agencies' means organisations in the statutory, voluntary and private sector that are providers of social services. These may include agencies whose primary function is in relation to health, education and housing

'Stakeholders' means any individual or individuals who may have an interest in the business of the Council or the Course Provision. Such individuals may include people who use services, carers and students, representatives of provider agencies, Further and Higher Education Institutions, the Scottish Executive, and the Quality Assurance Agency

'Termination of Training' means the process whereby a student may have their training terminated as a result of behaviour that is confirmed to be damaging or dangerous to either service users, other students or Course Providers, or creates an unacceptable risk for themselves or others

- 4.2 In the Rules, unless the contrary intention appears, words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular.
- 4.3 In the Rules, unless the contrary intention appears, references to:
- (a) numbered sub-paragraphs and paragraphs are references to the sub-paragraphs and paragraphs bearing that number in the rule in which they appear
  - (b) numbered rules are references to the rules bearing that number in these Rules
- 4.4 In the Rules, any disclosure of information between the Council and a Course Provider or employer or any other Stakeholder, will be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **5. Publication of the Rules**

- 5.1 The Rules shall be published on the Council's website on the Internet and in such other manner that the Council sees fit.

## **6. The Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland**

- 6.1 These arrangements have been prepared as part of the implementation of the Council's Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Social Service Workforce (2004). The Council's proposals for CPD take account of the needs of the whole workforce as articulated by workers, employers, service users and carers, education and training providers and the Scottish Executive.
- 6.2 The Council considers that in order to address particular learning needs linked to specific functions and responsibilities, that there will be occasions when a specialist course approved by the Council will be the most effective mechanism of ensuring standards of practice.
- 6.3 The Council wishes to ensure that in future all social service workers have opportunities to maintain and extend their professional practice, that there are pathways for the advancement of social work as a discipline, and opportunities for career progression for everyone in the workforce.
- 6.4 These new arrangements will apply to courses for all Social Service Workers as appropriate and will provide an approach which ensures standards of practice and, where required, supports the development of career pathways across the entire sector. The arrangements will promote a competent and confident workforce capable of delivering services in a changing environment and committed to developing a culture of learning.
- 6.5 The principles underpinning the Rules are consistent with the Council's principles governing qualifications for registration.
- 6.6 Service user and carer needs and perspectives will be at the heart of the specialist courses. This will include being involved in the approval process. In undertaking its quality assurance role, the SSSC will seek information from the Course Provider on the involvement of service users and carers in the programme including its monitoring services.

## **Part II - Approval of Courses**

### **7. Approval of courses**

- 7.1 The Council will approve specialist courses for persons who are social service workers, in accordance with section 54(1) of the Act and the provisions of the Rules.

### **8. Criteria for the approval of courses**

- 8.1 In order to gain approval of a course, a Course Provider must satisfy the Council that the following Criteria are met and will continue to be met during the period of proposed course provision:
- (a) the Course Provider has satisfied the Quality Assurance Agency, the Scottish Qualifications Authority or other nationally recognised quality assurance or awarding body that its procedures, processes and standards in respect of its educational provision are managed in a manner consistent with the relevant quality assurance requirements
  - (b) the Course Provider will comply with the Council's Rules in respect of the proposed course provision
  - (c) the proposed Course Provision is at the appropriate level in SCQF and complies with the principles, guidance and/or standards which will be issued or recognised by the Council and will be included on the list published by the Council at the date of approval. Where the relevant principles, standards and/or guidance are subsequently revised, the Council will amend its list to reflect the new version. The Course Provider will implement any necessary changes in the Course Provision within 12 months of the revised list being published by the Council, or by no later than the next internal subject review, whichever is the later
  - (d) there has been a validation or approval process in respect of the course, which includes confirmation that the proposed Course Provision:
    - (i) is designed and will be monitored and reviewed in accordance with the relevant principles, guidance and standards
    - (ii) will enable students completing an approved course to meet the outcomes required in the relevant principles, guidance and standards
    - (iii) will meet the terms of the Rules

- (e) a programme specification has been drawn up in accordance with national policy or guidelines or directions on programme specifications
- (f) a range of Stakeholders (including people who use services, carers, students, provider agencies, Course Providers) have been and will be involved collaboratively in the design, delivery and evaluation of the proposed Course Provision
- (g) the Course Provider has made adequate arrangements with Social Service Provider Agencies and others, for the purposes of ensuring that the proposed Course Provision meets the obligations set out in Rules 8.1 (b) and (c)
- (h) the proposed Course Provision takes account of the requirements of the Council's Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and the Council's Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers
- (i) in all aspects of delivery, the Course Provider will demonstrate an approach that reflects a commitment to equal opportunities and will meet legal obligations, including those in relation to equal opportunities and human rights
- (j) the Course Provider will inform the employer immediately in writing of any misconduct by a student that might call into question the student's suitability for that employment
- (k) the Course Provider has in place and operates arrangements to admit candidates with credit, in accordance with the aims of the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework
- (l) the Course Provider has procedures for complaints and appeals and Termination of Training
- (m) the arrangements for external examination will be as set out in Rules 19, 20 and 21
- (n) the Course Provider has in place arrangements to monitor and review the effectiveness of the arrangements for the proposed Course Provision
- (o) the Course Provider has arrangements in place to inform students about its own complaints procedure and the Council's Complaints Procedure: Approved Education and Training Provision for dealing with any complaints in respect of proposed course provision. Normally the Council will only consider a complaint when the student has exhausted the Course Provider's own complaints procedure.

## **9. Process for the approval of courses**

- 9.1 The Course Provider will provide the Council with the details of a named correspondent who will take responsibility for communication between the Course Provider and the Council.
- 9.2 The Course Provider will apply to the Council for approval using a standard form provided by the Council for that purpose.
- 9.3 The Council will make available guidance to the Course Provider which will assist it in preparing its application for approval. This guidance will be developed by the Council in collaboration with stakeholders.
- 9.4 In making application to the Council for the approval of a course, the Course Provider will confirm in writing that it will abide by the Rules using a Form of Agreement prescribed by the Council.
- 9.5 The Course Provider will provide such information as may reasonably be requested by the Council at the time of application about projected candidate numbers, resources for learning and assessment and for the management of the provision.
- 9.6 The Council will approve a course only when it is satisfied that the Criteria set out in Rule 8 have been met and will confirm approval in writing to the Course Provider. Where the Council decides not to approve a course it will inform the Course Provider in writing with reasons.
- 9.7 Where the Council has granted approval of a course, the following will apply:
  - (a) approval will remain effective for five years from the date of grant of such approval by the Council, unless earlier withdrawn in accordance with the provisions of the Rules, after which the approval will lapse, unless renewed in accordance with Rules 13, 14 and 15
  - (b) the Course Provider must not make any material change to the course provision without obtaining the Council's consent in writing
- 9.8 The Council will publish a list of Approved Specialist Courses in a range of formats.

## **10. Compliance during period of Course Provision**

- 10.1 The Course Provider will ensure that the Rules are complied with during the period of Course Provision. Where there has been Franchising in respect of the Course Provision, the Course Provider will remain responsible for ensuring that the Rules are complied with during the period of Course Provision.

- 10.2 The Criteria must be complied with at all times during the period of Course Provision.
- 10.3 The Course Provider will bring to the attention of the Council any matter that may affect the status of the course.

## **Part III - Monitoring, Review and Investigation of Courses**

### **11. Monitoring of Approved Specialist Courses**

- 11.1 Annual monitoring of approved courses will be undertaken by Course Providers in line with national quality assurance or awarding body requirements. In addition, the Course Provider's own monitoring process will draw on and respond to feedback from candidates; people who use social services; their carers; the staff involved in the delivery of the approved course; those who participate in the assessment process; employers and other interested stakeholders.
- 11.2 The Council will take reasonable steps to satisfy itself that Approved Specialist Courses continue to meet the Rules. The Council will undertake annual monitoring of approved courses, drawing on the activity being undertaken by the Course Provider, to satisfy itself that courses are achieving their stated aims.

### **12. Process for monitoring Approved Specialist Courses by the Council**

- 12.1 On an annual basis, by a specified date to be advised by the Council, the Course Provider will provide the Council with monitoring documentation. This will include such information as the Council may require which will include:
- (a) data relating to intake, progression and completion of candidates on the particular approved course
  - (b) information relating to complaints, appeals or termination of training where these have taken place
  - (c) copies of External Examiner or verifier annual reports and reports of any action taken as a result of the annual reports
  - (d) copies of any reports relating to internal quality assurance activity at subject level for the previous 12 months
- 12.2 From time to time, in order to satisfy itself that the Rules continue to be met, the Council may require the Course Provider to provide such additional information on request as it may reasonably require.
- 12.3 Where appropriate, the Council will confirm in writing to the Course Provider that, on the basis of information received by it through the annual monitoring, it believes that the approved course continues to meet the Rules. Otherwise, the provisions of Rule 16 will apply.

### **13. Reviewing and renewing approval of specialist courses**

- 13.1 On a periodic basis, at intervals of no more than five years, the Council will review its approval of an approved course in accordance with the provisions of Rules 14 and 15.
- 13.2 Where the Council is not satisfied that the approved course continues to meet the Rules, the provisions of Rule 16 will apply.

### **14. Process for reviewing and renewing approval of specialist courses**

- 14.1 There will be one internal subject review by the Course Provider within five years of the date of approval of the course by the Council, and at intervals of not more than five years thereafter. The Council will be entitled to participate in all such reviews as a full member. All such reviews will otherwise be carried out in accordance with relevant national quality assurance or awarding body guidance on the characteristics of internal subject review.
- 14.2 The Council will be consulted from the outset on the timing, planning, format and process of any internal subject review. Any matters which the Council wishes to raise must be taken account of as an integral part of the review.
- 14.3 The Course Provider will provide the Council as soon as reasonably practicable with reports on the outcomes of all relevant internal subject reviews and with the reports on the outcomes of action plans where these are required.
- 14.4 Where the Council is a participant in an internal subject review, it will produce a brief, formal report to be known as a Review Report which will take account of how the Course Provider is continuing to meet the Rules, indicate how comments made as part of the review process have been responded to by the Course Provider and identify any outstanding issues.
- 14.5 Where the Council believes that the Rules continue to be met, it may renew the approval of the course for a further period of five years.
- 14.6 The Course Provider will comply with any reasonable requirements imposed by the Council, and of which the Course Provider is advised in writing following a review, for the purpose of ensuring the course continues to meet the Rules.
- 14.7 If the Council considers that the Rules are no longer met, the Council will take action in accordance with Rule 16.
- 14.8 Copies of the Review Report will be sent to the Course Provider.



## **15. Council-led reviews of Course Provision**

- 15.1 The Council may initiate its own review of an approved course where it considers that internal subject reviews are not appropriately timed or do not sufficiently focus on the course provision.
- 15.2 The Council will give reasonable notice of its intention to undertake a Council-led review. Any such review will be undertaken in accordance with procedures published by the Council.
- 15.3 In accordance with its published procedures, the Council may arrange for persons to visit any Course Provider which is providing an approved course, for the purposes of undertaking Council-led reviews.
- 15.4 Such visits will normally be undertaken by Officers of the Council. However, the Council may appoint Council Members or other individuals to undertake such visits so long as they do not have, or have not had, any significant connection with the Course Provider being visited.
- 15.5 Where the Council undertakes its own review of an approved course, it will produce a Review Report which addresses the areas identified in Rule 14.4 above.
- 15.6 Where the Council believes that the Rules continue to be met, it may renew the approval of the course for a further period of five years.
- 15.7 The Course Provider will comply with any reasonable requirements imposed by the Council, and of which the Course Provider is advised in writing following a review, for the purpose of ensuring the course continues to meet the Rules.
- 15.8 If the Council considers that the Rules are no longer met, the Council will take action in accordance with Rule 16.
- 15.9 Copies of the Review Report will be sent to the Course Provider.
- 15.10 The Council may pay reasonable fees, allowances and expenses to persons appointed as visitors taking into account the length of the visit and the time required to draft a report, the complexity of the issues to be considered and so as to reimburse them for the costs of travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses in line with the Council's Policy on Business Travel and Subsistence.

## **16. Failure of Approved Specialist Courses to comply with the Rules**

- 16.1 Where the Council is of the view that there may be a failure on the part of a Course Provider to comply with one or more of the Rules, the Council will attempt to ensure compliance through negotiation with the Course Provider, in the following manner.
- 16.2 The Council will advise the named correspondent of the Course Provider that the Council is in possession of information that suggests a possible failure to comply with one or more of the Rules. Thereafter, the Council will seek to obtain additional information from the Course Provider and other person or persons having an interest.
- 16.3 After consideration of any information gathered at this preliminary stage, and after providing the Course Provider with an opportunity to remedy any alleged breach of the Rules, the Council will make a decision as to whether there is a breach of the Rules and in the event that there is, will allow the Course Provider an opportunity to remedy it.
- 16.4 Thereafter, where the Council remains of the view that there may be a continuing failure on the part of the Course Provider to comply with one or more of the Rules, the Council will advise the Course Provider, in writing, of its intention to initiate an Investigation using the processes set out in Rule 17. The Council will specify the grounds for taking this course of action.
- 16.5 Where it considers it appropriate due to the seriousness of the alleged failure, the Council may omit the procedures set out in Rules 16.2 and 16.3 and may inform the Course Provider in writing of its intention to initiate an Investigation immediately, in terms of Rule 17, specifying the grounds for taking this course of action.

## **17. Investigation of Approved Specialist Courses**

- 17.1 The Council will commence any Investigation no later than 28 days from the date on which it gave written notice of its intention to initiate an Investigation.
- 17.2 The purpose of an Investigation will be to ascertain whether or not a Course Provider has breached one or more of the Rules.
- 17.3 In accordance with its published procedures, the Council may arrange for persons to visit any Course Provider which is providing an approved course, in connection with an Investigation.
- 17.4 Visits in connection with an Investigation will normally be undertaken by Officers of the Council. However, the Council may appoint Council Members or other individuals to undertake such visits so long as they do not have, or have not had, any significant connection with the Course Provider being visited.

- 17.5 The Council may pay reasonable fees, allowances and expenses as set out in Rule 15.10 to persons appointed as visitors in terms of the Rules.
- 17.6 The Course Provider will co-operate with any Investigation, and in particular will afford the visitor such access to staff, students, premises and facilities as the Council may reasonably require for the purposes of undertaking an Investigation. The Course Provider will also co-operate with the Council in sharing relevant documentation.
- 17.7 If it is decided by the Council that the Course Provider has breached one or more of the Rules, the Council will advise the Course Provider in writing with the reasons for its decision and may require the Course Provider to undertake such remedial work as the Council sees fit. The Council will make reasonable efforts to agree, in writing, a plan of work with the Course Provider and set reasonable timescales for the Course Provider to undertake the work.
- 17.8 Thereafter where the remedial action taken by the Course Provider is considered by the Council to have remedied the breach, the Council will confirm, in writing, that it is satisfied with the action taken and confirm that the Course Provider now complies with the Rules.
- 17.9 Where the Course Provider fails to implement the remedial work referred to in Rule 17.7 within the timescale or where a plan of work is not agreed within a reasonable timescale, the Council will consider whether steps should be taken to withdraw approval of the Approved Specialist Course.

## **18. Withdrawal of approval**

- 18.1 The Council may withdraw approval of an Approved Specialist Course if it is satisfied, that a Course Provider is in breach of one or more of the Rules.
- 18.2 The Council will confirm in writing to the Course Provider any proposal to withdraw approval and the reasons for the proposal. The Course Provider will be given 28 days to make written representations to the Council regarding any such proposal. In coming to a decision on any proposal to withdraw approval, the Council will take into account any written representations so received. The Council will intimate in writing to the Course Provider any decision to withdraw approval of an Approved Specialist Course, the reasons for the decision, and the date on which such withdrawal becomes effective.
- 18.3 Any decision by the Council to withdraw approval will be taken with due regard to the needs and protection of all candidates registered on the Course. If necessary, the Council will work with the Course Provider to seek alternative provision for affected students.

## **Part IV - External examination**

### **19. External examination of Approved Specialist Courses**

19.1 The Course Provider or awarding body will appoint or will have appointed and work with External Examiners in accordance with guidance set by the relevant awarding body.

### **20. Criteria for the appointment of External Examiners**

20.1 In addition to satisfying the aforementioned expectations set down by the relevant awarding body, the Council requires the Course Provider to appoint External Examiners who are acceptable to the Course Provider and the Council in the following respects:

- (a) they will normally have a professional qualification in social service work recognised for the purposes of registration with the Council or in some closely related field
- (b) they should have expertise and experience relevant to the Course Provision. This may include appropriate research
- (c) they will have regard for the values espoused in the Council's Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers and the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy

20.2 In appointing External Examiners, the Course Provider or awarding body shall ensure that:

- (a) at least one External Examiner appointed to work with the Course Provider holds a social service work qualification recognised for the purposes of registration with the Council or a professional qualification in a closely related field
- (b) all reasonable efforts are made by the Course Provider to ensure that the appointment of External Examiners reflects a balance of academic and social service practice experience
- (c) all reasonable efforts are made by the Course Provider to ensure that the appointment of External Examiners reflects a mix of gender and ethnicity

### **21. Process for external examination**

21.1 Appointments of External Examiners will be for a maximum of five years.

- 21.2 The Course Provider will agree a contract for services with External Examiners that complies with the requirements of Rules 19 and 20 and will pay any appropriate fees. This contract will specify that the External Examiner will undertake his or her role in accordance with the guidance issued by the relevant awarding body.
- 21.3 In addition, the Course Provider should contract with External Examiners to:
- (a) ensure that their work takes account of how well the course is continuing to meet the Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers, the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers, and the Code of Practice for Employers
  - (b) provide an annual report to the Course Provider, which the Course Provider will in turn copy to the Council.
- 21.4 The Course Provider will satisfy the Council that the criteria for appointment are met and appropriate contracts with External Examiners are set in place as part of the process for the approval of Courses set out in Rule 9.

## **Part V - Provision of information to the Council**

### **22. Provision of information to the Council**

- 22.1 The Course Provider will be responsible for ensuring that at all times it is able to identify the status of all candidates who are or have been registered and is able to collect and analyse data in respect of numbers of applications; numbers of places offered; numbers of registrations; numbers of candidates at each assessment point who are referred, deferred, withdrawn, exited or failing; numbers of candidates offered entry with credit; and equal opportunities monitoring data.
- 22.2 The Course Provider will provide any information reasonably required by the Council in terms of the Rules, within 14 days of being requested to do so, or in such other timescales as may be reasonably imposed by the Council.

## **Part VI – Appeals against decisions of the Council**

### **23. Appeals against decisions of the Council**

- 23.1 The Council will operate an appeals process whereby a Course Provider may appeal to the Council against a decision not to approve a course in terms of Rule 9, any requirements of the Council imposed in terms of Rule 14.6 or Rule 15.7 or any decision to withdraw approval in terms of Rule 18.
- 23.2 A decision such as mentioned in Rule 23.1, other than a decision not to approve a course in terms of Rule 9 which will be of immediate effect, will not take effect:
- (a) if no appeal is brought, until the period of 28 days referred to in Rule 25.3 has elapsed
  - (b) if an appeal is brought, until that appeal is finally determined and the appeal is not upheld, or the appeal is abandoned

### **24. Criteria for appeals**

- 24.1 A Course Provider may appeal against a decision of the Council referred to in Rule 23.1 on the following grounds:
- (a) that the Council did not take into account material information which was made known to it at the time of the decision
  - (b) that new information which could not have been made available at the time of the decision and which materially affects the outcome has since become available
  - (c) that the Council based its decision on an incorrect material fact
  - (d) that the Council did not observe its own procedures and that this failure materially affected the decision
  - (e) that the Council acted contrary to natural justice
  - (f) that the Council exercised its discretion in an unreasonable manner.

### **25. Appeals process**

- 25.1 An appeal will be heard by an Appeals Panel consisting of two members of the Council and an individual who is not a member or Officer of the Council, but who has knowledge and experience of the type of course provision which is the subject of the appeal. No person may be a member

of the Appeals Panel if that person has had any previous involvement in the matter which is the subject of the appeal.

- 25.2 The members of any Appeals Panel will be independent of the Course Provider making the appeal.
- 25.3 A written notice of appeal must be lodged with the Council within 28 days of notification of the decision appealed against and must identify:
  - (a) the decision being appealed against
  - (b) the grounds for appeal
- 25.4 A written statement in support of the appeal and any documentary evidence may also be lodged with the Council by the Course Provider within this timescale. The Council may lodge any documentary evidence within 7 days of receipt of the written notice of appeal. The Course Provider and the Council will be provided with a copy of any documentary evidence lodged by the other party no later than 14 days prior to the hearing of the appeal.
- 25.5 The appeal will be heard within 28 days of receipt of written notice of appeal by the Council where it is practicable to do so. Otherwise the appeal will be heard as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 25.6 Subject to the requirements of natural justice and the Rules, the Appeals Panel may agree its own procedures.
- 25.7 The Appeals Panel may hear oral submissions by the Course Provider and the Council and may consider documentary evidence and the evidence of witnesses.
- 25.8 The standard of proof will be on the balance of probabilities.
- 25.9 An Appeals Panel may, by majority vote, make one of the following decisions:
  - (a) the appeal is upheld, in which case an officer of the Council may be directed to consider any material information known about, but not taken into account at the time of the decision appealed against or new material information or agree an action plan to rectify the effect of any failure to observe its own procedures which materially affected the decision, and make a new decision on the matter in terms of the Rules
  - (b) the appeal is not upheld, in which case the original decision will stand
  - (c) adjourn consideration of the appeal to a later date and if it thinks it appropriate to do so, require an officer of the Council and/or the



Course Provider to provide additional information to the reconvened hearing

- 25.10 The Council will issue to the Course Provider a written report setting out the Appeal Panel's decision and the reasons for its decision within 14 days of the Appeals Panel's decision.
- 25.11 The Council will make available detailed information about its appeals process on the Council's website on the Internet and in such other manner as the Council sees fit.
- 25.12 The Appeals Panel's decision will be final.

## **Part VII – Public record**

### **26. Public record**

- 26.1 The Council is committed to operating systems that are open and transparent to all. Once a course has been approved, the application document submitted by the Course Provider and approved by the Council together with the completed Form of Agreement will become a public record. The Council will produce an annual report on the outcomes of its quality assurance and enhancement activity.

## **Part VIII Review and amendment of the Rules**

### **27. Review and amendment of the Rules**

27.1 The Council may review and amend the Rules from time to time with the consent of Scottish Ministers.

## **SECTION TWO - REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN SCOTLAND 2005**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Course Providers must ensure that they meet the Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in respect of entry and in respect of teaching, learning and assessment.
- 1.2 The Requirements are written in a way that is consistent with the 'Scottish Requirements for Social Work Training' which forms part of the 'Framework for Social Work Education in Scotland' published by the Scottish Executive in 2003.

### **2. Entry Requirements**

- 2.1 All Course Providers must do the following:
  - A** make sure that the candidate meets the Course Provider's admission requirements for the course
  - B** make sure that the candidate is employed as a social worker or social service worker and is currently eligible for registration in terms of the Council's Registration Rules at the point of registration on the course
  - C** use selection procedures that:
    - o evaluate the candidate's capacity to benefit from the intended learning outcomes
    - o confirm that the candidate has the full support of his/her employer for the duration of the course
    - o ensure that the candidate has full information on the commitment required from them
  - D** make sure that selection policies and procedures include effective and appropriate ways of involving representatives of Course Providers, Social Service Provider Agencies, service users and carers.

### 3. Teaching, learning and assessment requirements

#### 3.1 All Course Providers must do the following:

- E** make sure the content and delivery of the course is consistent with and promotes the Council's Codes of Practice
- F** design the content, structure and delivery of the training to allow candidates to demonstrate that they can meet the relevant principles, guidance and/or standards issued or recognised by the Council
- G** make sure that there are systems in place to support and enable people who use services and their carers to make an effective contribution to the design, delivery and evaluation of the Course Provision
- H** make sure that the programme promotes inter-professional education through its design and delivery
- I** provide a clear rationale for the course, supported by employers, that links course learning outcomes to employment needs and workforce planning
- J** demonstrate that the design, delivery and evaluation of the course takes into account the diverse needs of learners
- K** make sure that all candidates have the necessary range of learning opportunities that will enable them to demonstrate the learning they need at the required SCQF level
- L** make sure that arrangements for the tutoring and/or mentoring and practice assessment of candidates are in place
- M** make sure that all candidates will be assessed in practice over the course in such a way as to demonstrate that they are able to carry out the following to the required level:
  - contribute to the learning and development of others
  - work in a way that actively promotes and values diversity
- N** make sure that students' achievement is regularly and accurately assessed, and confirm that all candidates have been assessed and have met **all** the learning outcomes based on the relevant principles, guidance and/or standards, before they are given the specialist award

- O** make sure that the assessment strategy, including policies and procedures for assessment, is based on:
  - effective and appropriate ways of meeting the requirements of key stakeholders in social service
  - a partnership between Course Providers and employers which promotes the integration of theory and practice
  - the integration of practice and learning
  
- P** make sure that:
  - the assessment of practice is demonstrated either through a separate module/unit or other distinct part of the award or integrated throughout the course
  - the competence in practice is subject to assessment by a competent and qualified practitioner (preferably a person who has undertaken an assessor or other related nationally recognised qualification) who is qualified and competent to practice in the relevant area
  - there is direct and verifiable evidence of practice competence
  
- Q** make sure that the candidates' continuing learning requirements are recorded in an individual learning plan
  
- R** make sure that the course is continually updated as a result of developments in legislation, government policy and best practice so candidates have the skills, knowledge and understanding they need.
  
- S** make sure that arrangements for the Recognition of Prior Learning are in place and show articulation points with other courses
  
- T** assist candidates who are Council registrants to demonstrate that they have met the requirements for Post Registration Training and Learning as set down for the purposes of confirming ongoing registration with the Council



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