HR & OD POLICIES

human resources and organisational development

SSSC Registration

Procedure

Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

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1. STRATEGY AIMS

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) was formed on the 1st October 2001 following the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. The SSSC has the duty of registering all Social Services Workers and developing the Codes of Practice. The Code of Practice sets down the standards and responsibilities that employees and employers within the Social Services should adhere to. By developing the Codes of Practice and the registration process, the standards will be raised within Social Services.

Registration is based on qualifications and experience which are relevant to the post. Registration will also be a legal requirement and therefore it is compulsory for employers and employees within the Social Service Council to comply with this process. Without the relevant registration employees will not be in a position to continue practicing.

Employers have the responsibility of ensuring their workforce is suitably registered and attaining the standards set down in the Codes of Practice. They have a duty to support and guide employees through the processes involved. However, the employee also has a responsibility to comply with what is required of them and ensure they achieve the relevant registration.

The aim of the strategy is to provide guidance to line managers on the processes for dealing with employees who cannot or will not achieve registration.

Scope of the Strategy

The procedure will apply to all employees required to register with the SSSC.

2. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

This guidance should be used in conjunction with relevant policies and legislation,

including:

- Work Performance Ability Policy
- Redeployment Policy
- Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice 2006
- Attendance Management Policy

- Regulation of Care (Fitness of Employee in Relation to Care Services)(Scotland)(No.2) Regulations 2009

3. PROCEDURE

There are two situations that can arise which result in non-registration of employees;

- Existing employees refusing to gain registration
- Existing employees failing to meet the standards required for registration.

The situation will govern the action to be taken, and these procedures will be looked at separately in the following section.

4. TIMING

This guidance can be utilised from the time that registration becomes available for employee groups. Aberdeenshire Council recommends that Social Services Workers register as soon as possible to support its vision of delivering 'the very best service in Scotland'. However, it is essential that employees commit to submitting their applications to the SSSC prior to the deadline set by the SSSC. This deadline allows the SSSC to process the employees application and for the employee to gain registration prior to registration becoming compulsory.

Therefore any action required should be taken prior to the application deadline.

5. EXISTING EMPLOYEES REFUSING TO GAIN REGISTRATION

Refusal by existing employees to go through the relevant procedures to gain registration is a serious matter. Not being registered, for whatever reason, prevents them from working for Aberdeenshire Council in certain posts.

If an employee indicates that they are not willing to go through the registration process, their line manager should discuss this with them and ensure that the person is aware of the implications of not being registered.

Attempts should be made to find out if there is an underlying reason for the nonregistration, for example:

- Concern regarding the qualification
- Lack of understanding of the process.

Throughout these discussions, every attempt should be made to persuade the employee to register and to remind them that the Council will not be in a position to continue their employment after the date by which they must be registered. If the employee continues to refuse to work towards registration, the following course of action should be taken:

- An HR Advisor will meet with the employee (and TU representative if applicable) to discuss their continuing refusal to gain registration. Following the meeting, the Service will send a letter to the employee giving a full account of the meeting, reminding the employee of the consequences of not being registered and suggesting one final time that the employee should register (detailed below). The employee has 7 days to respond to the letter.
- If the employee does not respond, or if, on receipt of the employee's response, the HR Advisor finds that there is a continued refusal to work towards registration they will recommend dismissal.

6. EXISTING EMPLOYEES FAILURE TO MEET THE STANDARDS REQUIRED FOR REGISTRATION

Employees who endeavour to gain registration to the SSSC, but do not meet the standards required (e.g. are failing to achieve the qualifications for registration or do not meet other standards necessary) should be offered help and support to achieve the standards required. The Work Performance Ability Policy (WPA) should be used as guidance in these cases.

Once the area of weakness has been identified, it is important to begin dealing with the situation immediately. A meeting should be held with the employee in question and the line manager to:

- Consider the areas of weakness
- To ensure the employee is aware of the standards/qualifications that they are required to meet
- To establish the reasons for the weaknesses e.g. lack of ability, conduct, medical reasons etc. (In line with stage 2 of the WPA Policy).

The line manager should invite the employee to this meeting in writing, using the following letter template Invite to SSSC Registration Meeting Following this initial meeting, counselling and review meetings should be held in order to create an agreed action plan and to ensure the employee is achieving the specified targets (as

per stage 3 and 4 of the WPA Policy). The timescales may vary from those stated in the WPA Policy; depending on the length of time that employee has to register.

It is hoped that by going through these processes, employees will be supported to achieve the required standards. However, should they still be unable to register, a work performance hearing should be convened according to stage 5 of the WPA Policy. If it is found that the individual has made no progress towards gaining SSSC registration, recognition of this may be confirmed in writing. Proposed sample wording that may be used can be found within the Following SSSC Registration Meeting template letter within the resource pack.

Alternatively, if appropriate, the employee may be offered redeployment to another post within the council. If this were the case, the Redeployment Policy would be followed. The employee would be placed on the Redeployment Register (if applicable) for a period determined by the employees length of service, and if alternative employment (which would need to be in a post that registration to the SSSC is not a prerequisite) is not sourced the employee could be dismissed.

Again situations like this should be dealt with as they arise; they should not be prolonged until the application deadline, or when registration is compulsory.

If dismissal is the eventual outcome the employee is required to be informed in writing by their line manager, sample wording at Dismissal SSSC Registration Meeting may be used. The employee would have the right to appeal this decision.

7. EXISTING EMPLOYEES WHO FAIL TO MAINTAIN REGISTRATION

Following the date where registration becomes compulsory for Social Service Workers, if an employee fails to reregister or fails to pay annual fee and this results in removal from the SSSC register, this would preclude them from continuing to work. In cases like this the employee will be suspended from duties without pay and would be required to receive confirmation in writing by their line manager, sample wording at Suspension SSSC Registration Meeting may be used. This may lead to the employee being dismissed. This action is taken within the terms of Regulation of Care (Fitness of Employee in Relation to Care Services)(Scotland)(No.2) Regulations 2009.

This states that we cannot employ someone as a social service worker in the provision of a care service, unless that person is fit to be so employed and that a person is unfit unless registered with the SSSC.

8. REGISTRATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN FOR NEW GROUPS

Clarification

Clarify the groups of employees that the SSSC Registers are currently openfor. In particular the groups where an application deadline is approaching. Understand the numbers involved, the timeframes and the requirements that have to be met.

Communication

Write to all employees involved to explain the following:

- The SSSC Register is now open for them to register, and the deadline date has been set that their application must be submitted by
- Employees can register with conditions prior to achieving their full qualification (e.g. SVQ2/3)
- The Aberdeenshire Council will expect people to commence registration as soon as possible – to ensure the standards set by the SSSC are met
- Ask any employees who have issues with registering, to contact their line manager as soon as possible.

Other communications methods could include:

- Road shows/groups meetings – to discuss registration and qualifications
- Registered employees have discussions with those who are not yet registered.

Commitment

Ensure employees are aware of our commitment to the SSSC Standards and to helping them achieve these standards. Gain their commitment to register as soon as possible.

Check

Monitor employees to ensure those who have made a commitment to register are taking steps to do so.

Combat

Work with employees who have not given the commitment to register, to try and alleviate any fears and concerns in a bid to combat refusal to register.

Collaborate

Work with employees who are having difficulty achieving the standards for registration and support them to improve.

Non-Registration

Follow the SSSC Registration Management Strategy for employees who refuse to or are having difficulty achieving registration.

9. FURTHER ADVICE & GUIDANCE

Information on Contract Clauses and Registration Advert can be found in the Resource Pack.

Any queries concerning the application of the above guidance should be referred to a member of HR Operational Team.

SSSC Registration

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Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes
16-03-2010	-	Creation of all documents
06-03-2014	16-03-2010	Additional sample letters included, rewording of process
20-08-2015	06-03-2014	Format update
02-11-2021	20-08-2015	Format update