



# **Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements for Registered Social Care Workers**

**Part One - Guidance**

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## Foreword

Post Registration Training and Learning provides an opportunity for social care workers to access and organise their Continued Professional Development (CPD). It signifies a commitment to ongoing learning and development. Registrants will be able to take responsibility for their own learning and identify their specific learning needs.

This guidance document (Part One) outlines the rationale to Post Registration Training and Learning and the requirements for continued registration with the NISCC. It provides advice on processes to evidence training and learning and links to the suggested forms that can be used for recording and analysis provided in the accompanying (Part Two) booklet. Information is also given on how staff from different sectors should construct learning plans and suitable recording formats. The processes have been designed to keep extra work to a minimum, and to fit in with the process of supervision. The format is sufficiently flexible to be adapted to all social care posts.

A number of underlying principles have been considered in the development of this guidance. It is intended to raise the professionalism of the social care workforce, and encourage registrants to actively seek to improve their skills. This should be an ongoing process; owned and managed by the Registrant, with support from their line manager. Consideration will be given to the Registrant's overall career development; recognising specific needs and, where possible, relating to the agency's development.

Post Registration Training and Learning provides benefits for registrants, employers and the profession; offering opportunities to improve workforce morale, strengthen skills within the profession and enhance public confidence in social care. It offers an opportunity to enhance our roles through CPD, structure our learning and to have documentation that will be transferable to any subsequent post. It is essential for social care to be regarded as seriously as other professions who already undertake mandatory CPD, especially in the multi-disciplinary settings where much of our work takes place.

Finally, I would like to thank the people who have contributed to this document.

Jonathan Giles  
**Chair of Working Group**

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## Introduction

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) was established in October 2001 to protect people who use social care services and raise standards in social care training and practice. This will be achieved by promoting education and training for staff and by registering and regulating the social care workforce. The estimated NISCC register of social care workers opened in April 2003 and the 30,000 people, who make up the social care workforce, will be registered in phased groups, over the next few years. Eventually all social care workers will have to register with NISCC, which means they will have to demonstrate that they are “fit and competent“ to practise.

The NISCC Registration Rules require registered social care workers to complete and return a Record of Achievement of their 15 days or 90 hours of training and learning during each three-year registration period. (Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements - Schedule 3). Registrants must renew their registration every three years. At the point of re-registration, they will have to submit evidence on the Record of Achievement form that they have met the post registration training and learning requirements. (This rule will not apply to student social workers - Rule 8.) This document provides guidance and specifies the requirements for social care workers and employers. It aims to help them plan and record suitable training to meet the NISCC Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements.

This includes advice on:

- Social care workers’ and employers’ responsibilities for training and learning.
- Training and learning for specific categories of workers.
- Planning and recording training and learning.
- Models of good practice for staff supervision and appraisal.
- Sample recording forms.

Key features of the training and learning are:

- Flexibility to allow for individual circumstances and aspirations.
- Shared responsibility between manager and practitioner.
- Allows for a range of routes with no preference.
- Incorporates individual training needs.
- Incorporates an employment-based focus.
- Incorporates a policy-based focus.

The continued professional development of the social care workforce is a major priority for the NISCC, to ensure the provision of quality social care services for the public. The Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements not only provide a framework for continuing professional development, which is an essential part of social care governance, but also help staff to keep up to date with new developments in practice, legislation and policy. It is an opportunity for staff to take time to reflect and think about how they are doing their job and how they could improve their practice.

Registrants will be meeting their Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements in a variety of different practice areas such as, direct practice, management, education and research, consultancy and inspections. They can choose from a range of learning activities to keep themselves up to date in their current job and which may also relate to future career progression.

## **Responsibilities of Employers of Registered Social Care Workers**

Employers have a shared responsibility in supporting workers to meet these requirements. The NISCC Code of practice for Employers of Social Care Workers (code 3) states that:

“as a social care employer, you must provide training and development opportunities to enable social care workers to strengthen and develop their knowledge and skills.”

This includes:

- Providing induction, training and development opportunities to help social care workers do their jobs effectively and prepare for new and changing roles and responsibilities (code 3.1).
- Supporting staff in posts subject to registration to meet the NISCC’s eligibility criteria for registration and its requirement for continuing professional development (code 3.3).

## **Responsibilities of Registered Social Care Workers**

Registrants are responsible for making sure they meet the NISCC Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements. The NISCC Code of Practice for Social Care Workers (code 6) states that:

“as a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.”

This includes:

- Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful, safe and effective way (code 6.1).
- Undertaking relevant training to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills and contributing to the learning and development of others (code 6.8).

In order to maintain registration, the following requirement of 15 days or 90 hours of training and learning over the three-year registration period must be met. At the point of re-registration the Council will only grant an application for renewal if it is satisfied that the applicant has completed the post registration training and learning requirements and has endorsement for this.

## **Guidance for Specific Categories of Workers**

This guidance outlines how different categories of social care workers can meet the post registration training and learning requirements. It includes practitioners, managers, part-time workers, agency workers, and unemployed people who wish to return to work.

### **1. Newly Qualified Social Workers**

Newly qualified social workers must complete the Assessed Year in Employment (AYE). The AYE is designed to ensure that newly qualified social workers have made the transition from student to employee and are fit to practise as a fully accountable social workers. Once the AYE condition has been removed from a new social worker's registration, they will normally be granted a 3 year registration during which they will be expected to meet PRTL requirements. Information on the AYE is available on the NISCC website [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)

## **2. Managers**

Managers should demonstrate an understanding of current issues around good practice, fitness to practise, supervision and performance appraisal. Managers have to relate their training and learning to their own practice. This may be through developing the organisation or developing services.

## **3. General Managers**

If general managers want to remain on the social care register they have to show an understanding of current issues around good practice and fitness to practise. The training and learning must be related to social care practice.

## **4. Educators/Inspectors/Professional Advisers**

Educators should show an understanding of current issues around good practice and fitness to practise in a generic sense. They should include reflection on how their learning has an impact on service users.

## **5. Self-Employed People**

It is considered good practice for self employed people to identify a mentor who will support them to meet their post registration training and learning and who will fulfil the line manager function alongside the main contractor. (The mentor may be the main contractor). They should include reflection on how their learning has an impact on service users.

## **6. Agency Workers**

There is a shared responsibility for the employment agency and the social care contractor to ensure these workers are fit and competent to practise. The contractor must provide opportunities for these workers to meet their training and learning requirements. The line manager must provide supervision and support for the worker to meet these requirements.

## **7. Part-time Workers**

Part-time workers should be given equal opportunities and support to meet their Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements, which are the same as for other categories of workers (15 days or 90 hours). It is equally important for this group of

staff to be appropriately prepared for the demands of this job through continuous development of their knowledge, skills and values.

## **8. People on the Register who are not in Current Social Care Employment**

If staff are unable to meet their Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements because of breaks from work, (e.g. people on career breaks, unemployed etc.) this could be an issue at the time of renewal of registration. In very exceptional circumstances NISCC may make special arrangements, regarding PRTL. In such circumstances, registrants will need to provide information in writing for consideration by NISCC. This may result in a condition being placed on registration.

## **Planning and Recording Training and Learning**

Registrants (along with line managers or mentors where possible) should identify learning activities relevant to their job. They must keep a record of the ways in which their learning informs their practice. Completing the Record of Achievement provided is a way of doing this. They should share this information with their employer (line manager) so that appropriate support can be given.

## **Training and Learning Records**

Registrants are required to renew their registration every three years and they have to provide evidence that they have met the Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements. If they are unable to provide this evidence, this may be considered misconduct and could affect their ability to renew registration. NISCC will monitor all records of learning achievements and will sample Records of Evidence. This means that all registrants identified for sampling must submit a Record of Achievement (page 5 and 6 in Part Two) as well as one Record of Evidence for every training activity identified on the Record of Achievement. NISCC recommends that registrants and their line managers maintain the following:

- Post Registration Training and Learning Plan
- Post Registration Training and Learning Records of Evidence
- Post Registration Training and Learning Record of Achievement

NISCC supplies post registration training and learning Record of Achievement forms to social care workers at the point of registration and renewal. Copies of suggested Training and Learning Plans and Records of Evidence are included, as Part Two of this leaflet.

## Models of Good Practice for Staff Supervision and Appraisal

It is good practice to have supervision as part of the post registration phase and the preparation for re-registration. Post registration training and learning should be integrated into existing training and development arrangements rather than standing apart as a new task. As identified in the *NISCC Code of Practice for Employers of Social Care Workers*, agencies should monitor supervision policy and practice. This will ensure a qualitative focus to the process of supporting effective practice and good conduct and will assist staff to further improve their performance.

Registrants should be able to:

- Relate learning to improved outcomes for service users.

and they may wish to:

- Refer to appropriate occupational standards.<sup>1</sup>
- Link to the knowledge and skills framework.<sup>2</sup>

The NISCC codes of practice specify a recognised role for both social care workers and employers in the responsibility for meeting training and learning requirements. Social care workers should identify their training needs through their line management and a record of this learning should be maintained for sampling. Employers have to ensure they provide supervision and opportunities for training within the normal work cycle. They should check that workload is not an obstacle to this. The benefits of this will include a continually developing social care workforce, delivering quality services through the promotion of training, registration, and the maintenance of the codes of practice. The process of supervision itself will also benefit, through the sharing of experience, methods and research, and the dissemination of good practice.

The registration process will improve the professionalism of the social care workforce and lead to a better quality of service for the general public. It would therefore be considered good practice for line managers and workers to maximise the inclusion of training opportunities that are lead by and/or have a high level of input from service users and carers.

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<sup>1</sup>Information available on NISCC website: [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)

<sup>2</sup>Information available on DHSSPS (NI) website: [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications)

The following tables outline the processes and responsibilities, for both social care workers and employers, to develop good practice in supervision and appraisal of training and learning.

## Table 1 - Supervision

### Responsibilities

- The employer must ensure adequate supervision takes place.
- The line manager must assist by identifying needs and opportunities, provide time to reflect and apply the learning, and verify the learning. The learning must also be applicable to practice. A record of the training needs should be maintained and the methods by which those needs were met.
- The Registrant must identify needs and collate a training plan, a record of evidence and a Post Registration Training and Learning Record of Achievement.

### Processes

- Many agencies already have formats to include personal development within the process of supervision, which will need to be expanded to incorporate post registration training and learning.
- Along with a review of current work, supervision should incorporate a regular training review, which includes recording identified needs and outlining training opportunities on the appropriate forms.
- Following the identification of training needs, further supervision sessions should review the training and identify how it has helped practice.

This process should result in a training accomplishment file, which is held by the registrant and outlines the 15 days/90 hours training that have been undertaken. This should be verified by the line manager and can be sampled by the Council, on demand.

## Table 2 - Training

### Responsibilities

- The employer must provide access to learning, resources and time out to complete the training.
- The Registrant must maintain and improve their knowledge and skills related to social care.

### Processes

This should incorporate a range of developmental opportunities such as:

- Induction
- Reading and literature reviews
- Secondments
- Mentoring
- Participation in training/development days
- Participating in accredited courses
- Presenting independent portfolios for accreditation

This list is not exhaustive and registrants must ensure that all training relates to their main post. In the case of those not directly involved with social care, training should relate to the field of social care.

### Table 3 - Evidence

<p><b>Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Registrant and their line manager must ensure evidence of training and learning is recorded and verified.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence provided by the Registrant must incorporate reflection and application to practice within the social care field. It would be useful to involve the line manager in the process, as this is an additional endorsement of the learning.</li> <li>• It is also important that this evidence is sustainable and can move from post to post with the Registrant.</li> </ul>

### Standards for Assessing Post Registration Training and Learning

NISCC will sample 2% of registrants applying for renewal of registration. Those identified as part of the sample will be notified before they return their Renewal of Registration application.

The sample should be assessed against the following standards:

1. Identify development needs and collate a PRTL Training Plan, Records of Evidence and a Record of Achievement.
2. Demonstrate that their PRTL activities contribute to the maintenance and improvement of their knowledge and skills related to social care.
3. Seek to ensure that their PRTL activities contribute to the quality of their practice and service delivery, including being of benefit to the service user.
4. Present their PRTL Records of Evidence to the NISCC upon request.

## Guidance for Recording Post Registration Training and Learning

As a condition of continuing registration, registrants must complete 90 hours or 15 days of study, training or other activities. This will contribute to their professional development and life long learning. Registrants must keep a record of all their training and learning throughout their career. NISCC may ask them to provide evidence that they have taken part in training and learning activities.

The following forms which are provided in the accompanying Part Two booklet may be useful in helping registrants and their managers to prepare a record of learning and achievement.

- Training and Learning Plan
- Record of Evidence

The following form **must** be used when renewing registration with the NISCC:

- Post–Registration Training and Learning Record of Achievement

These plans and records should be completed and retained by the Registrant, but it would also be helpful to give a copy to their line manager. (Self employed people should have their own procedures in place for dealing with their training and learning. This includes the need for mentoring and the need for external verification). The Post Registration Training and Learning Record of Achievement should be returned to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) at the time of renewal of registration. The Training Plan and Record of Evidence should not be submitted to the NISCC when applying to renew registration. They should be retained for future use because the NISCC will sample these randomly; registrants may then be required to produce these documents.

**For further information about Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements for Registered Social Care Workers**

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