



Guidance notes for applications

to the Social Care Register

These guidance notes are intended to assist individuals applying to register as a social work student on the Honours Degree in Social Work course in Northern Ireland

The information in this booklet is for people who intend to undertake training to become a social worker and have accepted a place on an Honours Degree in Social Work course in Northern Ireland.

Please return your NISCC registration application form as soon as possible. It is very important that we have time to process your application before your course begins.

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Introduction

About the NISCC

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) was established in October 2001, as part of the government's quality agenda to raise standards within social care. The NISCC's mission statement is:

To protect the public by promoting and supporting confidence, competence and credibility in the social care workforce

One of the vital building blocks in achieving this mission has been the development and implementation of the Social Care Register.

About the Social Care Register

The NISCC has responsibility for building and maintaining the Social Care Register. The aim of the Social Care Register is to make sure that all social workers and social care workers are suitable for work in social care. By completing this application process, everyone on the register will have shown that they are suitable for work in social care. Each registrant will have illustrated that they:

- Have the necessary qualifications and / or training
- Are physically and mentally fit
- Are of good character
- Agree to comply with the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers

The general public and employers have access to the Social Care Register. The register will show the following limited information about registrants:

- Full name and title
- Registration number
- The postal town of your social work degree course

Employers will have enhanced access. If required, the following additional information will be made available to social care employers:

- Any conditions imposed on registration
- Any periods of suspension imposed at anytime
- Any admonishment imposed at anytime
- Any qualifications

Completing the application form

Section 1 - Your details

To begin the registration process you will be asked to provide information, including your name, date of birth, address and contact details. You will be asked to provide a password so that registration staff can confirm your identity should you contact the NISCC by telephone. You should also provide a password prompt so that, if you forget your password, registration staff can provide you with your password prompt to help you. See some examples below:

Password: purple

Password: Jones

Password prompt: favourite colour

Password prompt: mother's maiden name

Section 2 - Social work course details

You are asked to indicate which educational establishment you have accepted a place at to study for the Honours Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland and the duration of your course. This information will be used by the NISCC if we need to contact your education institution about your registration.

Section 3 - Current study

Fill in this section if you are currently a full-time or part-time student. Please provide details of any paid or unpaid employment in social care. You do not need to complete section 4 (current employment) if you are currently a student.

Section 4 - Current employment

Fill in this section if you are not currently a student. You are asked to provide details of your current job. On the application form, you will be asked to select and complete the employment circumstances most relevant to you. It is possible that more than one of these employment circumstances will apply.

Section 5 - Employment history

You are asked to provide details of every social care job you have held for the last 10 years.

If you have spent time working for a recruitment agency, give the name and address of the agency - you do not need to give us details of any placements.

You do not have to provide details of employment outside social care.

Section 6 - Other regulatory bodies

This section is only relevant if you are, or if you have ever been, registered with one of the regulatory bodies listed in Appendix 1 of this booklet.

If you are currently, or if you have ever been, registered with another regulatory body, either in the UK or abroad, you must provide these details in section 6.

Section 7 - Disciplinary record

You are asked to provide details of your current disciplinary record. This includes details of a disciplinary investigation pending against you, or a disciplinary action or finding that is currently on your Human Resources, educational establishment record, or records held by other bodies.

You will be asked to provide information on:

- Any current disciplinary investigation about you being undertaken by an employer or educational establishment, either within or outside UK
- Any current disciplinary finding against you by an employer or educational establishment, either within or outside UK
- Any disciplinary action pending, or taken against you by any regulatory body or licensing organisation, such as the NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council), either within or outside UK
- Dismissal from a social care post

Telling the NISSC about a current disciplinary action or finding taken against you, will not necessarily prevent you from being registered. The NISSC will consider the information you provide and, if necessary, may write to you for more information to help decide if you should be registered.

Section 8 - Criminal offences

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and people in social care work

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978 allows some criminal offences to become spent after a fixed period. However, for occupations in social care, the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 requires you to declare convictions even if they are spent.

Telling the NISSC about a criminal record, will not necessarily prevent you from being registered. You will be asked to complete details of any criminal offences in section 8 of the application form. You will be asked to provide information on:

- Any previous conviction, regardless of the sentence you were given
- Any pending criminal proceeding against you in which you have been formally charged
- Any formal caution or binding-over you have received

For more information on what the NISCC will do with the information you provide, please see Appendix 2 of these guidance notes.

Request for Criminal Records Check

In order to complete the application process, **all** applicants must complete the Request for Criminal Records Check consent form, which is included separately from the application form, within this pack.

Non-UK Police Report

If you have spent 12 months (or more) abroad within the five years prior to this application, you are also required to submit a criminal records check from the country in which you were living.

Section 9 - Your health

Your ability to carry out any role in social care safely is dependant on your physical and mental fitness. You are asked to indicate if you have a health condition that falls within the categories in section 9.

If you have declared a health condition, and you have had an occupational health assessment carried out by your employer, you are asked to provide this information.

If you have declared a health condition, but have not had an occupational health assessment, the NISCC will ask your permission to collect further information from your doctor or any other relevant person. This will be at no cost to you. Please complete the Health Consent form in section 10 of the application form.

Section 10 - Health consent form

You should only complete this section if you have declared a physical or mental health condition in section 9

By completing this form, you are giving the NISCC permission to collect further information from your doctor, a health professional known to you or if, needed, from any other relevant person. This will be at no cost to you.

Section 11 - Personal declaration

You will be asked to read, sign and date a personal declaration in section 11 of the application form. This declaration sets out the terms of the agreement under which you will be registered, and should be read carefully.

In order to make your application valid, this section must be **signed and dated**.

Section 12 - Equal opportunities (optional)

An equal opportunities form in section 12 of the application form, is used to ensure that all applicants and registrants are treated fairly and equitably. The information collected in this form will not be used in the registration process and will be treated in confidence. You do not have to fill out this form to apply for registration.

Feedback (optional)

The NISCC always welcomes feedback about registration or any other aspect of our work. Please complete the feedback form enclosed separately or alternatively, you can write to the registration manager at the address below.

The NISCC also recognises that from time to time, there may be problems or issues with registration. You have a right to raise issues if you believe that your application has not been treated fairly. We have produced a leaflet entitled *Your right to complain* and a copy of this leaflet can be obtained from the registration manager at the addresses below.

The Registration Manager
Northern Ireland Social Care Council
7th Floor Millennium House
19-25 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7AQ
Email: registration@niscc.n-i.nhs.uk

The steps to completing your application

When completing the form:

- Please use black ink
- Write clearly in CAPITAL LETTERS
- Read the accompanying guidance booklet
- Read the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers
- Fill in sections 1-3 of the form
- If appropriate, fill in section 4 (Current employment)
- Fill in section 5 (Employment history)
- Fill in sections 6-8
- Fill in section 9 (Your health)
- If appropriate, complete the health report consent form(s)
- Read, sign and date the personal declaration
- Fill in the criminal records check consent form
(included separately from the main application form)
- Fill in the equal opportunities monitoring form (optional)
- Fill in the feedback form (optional)

Finally, return envelope with:

- Completed application form, signed and dated
- Photocopy of your birth certificate
- Photocopy of your approved photographic identification
(e.g. passport, driving licence or electoral card)
- Your application fee
(see the application fee information sheet for more information)
- Criminal records check consent form

Further Information

What happens next?

The NISCC will send you a letter of acknowledgement once they have received your application form.

If your application to register is successful, the NISCC will write to you. When the educational establishment confirms you have commenced your course, the NISCC will activate your registration as a social work student.

If the NISCC have any concerns about your application, or if they decide to impose conditions on your registration, they will keep you informed in writing.

Storing your information

The NISCC will store all the information about your current registration in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. When you renew your registration, your details will be updated in accordance with any new or changed information.

The NISCC will keep any information and material used to make a decision about your registration.

Your contact details will be used to keep in touch with you.

Registering in other UK countries

There are four social care regulatory councils. Each one maintains a register in its own country:

- The Northern Ireland Social Care Council
- The General Social Care Council
- The Scottish Social Services Council
- The Care Council for Wales

As a student you must register with the council of the country in which you study. By completing the current student application pack, you are registering as a social work student with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

If you are unsure which country to register with, call the NISCC registration team on 028 9041 7633 for advice.

Further information and advice

For further advice about registration, call 028 9041 7633 and ask to speak to a member of the registration team. Textphone is also available on 028 9023 9340. Alternatively, you can email registration@niscc.n-i.nhs.uk, visit www.niscc.info or write to:

Registration Team, Northern Ireland Social Care Council
7th Floor Millennium House, 19-25 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7AQ

Appendix 1 - Regulatory bodies

- British Psychological Society (chartered membership only)
- General Chiropractic Council
- General Dental Council
- General Medical Council
- General Optical Council
- General Osteopathic Council
- General Teaching Council
- General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland
- General Teaching Council for Scotland
- General Teaching Council for Wales
- Health Professions Council
- Nursing and Midwifery Council
- Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Appendix 2 - Criminal offences

The NISCC will consider the information you provide in the Criminal Offences section of the application form and, if necessary, may write to you for more information to help decide if you should be registered. The NISCC are likely to ask about:

- Details of your offence
- Evidence of rehabilitation
- Character references

In considering the application, the NISCC will take account of:

- Whether your offence is relevant to social care work
- The seriousness of your offence
- The length of time since your offence
- Whether you have a pattern of offending behaviour
- Whether your situation has changed since the offence or offending behaviour
- The circumstances surrounding your offence
- Your explanation for the offence

The NISCC can take one of three decisions:

- Register you without conditions
- Register you with conditions
- Refuse to register you

Appendix 3 - Health

The NISCC is required to ensure that all applicants for registration are physically and mentally fit to perform the whole or part of social care work. Employers are also required to ensure that people working in social care are fit to do so.

The NISCC is interested only in serious, long term conditions that could affect a person's ability to work as a social worker or social care worker. If you declare a health condition, the NISCC will assess its relevance to work in social care by seeking advice and an assessment from medical personnel, including an existing occupational health assessment or your own doctor(s).

Once this process is complete, the NISCC can take one of three decisions:

- Register you without conditions
- Register you with conditions, for example:
 - you work within reasonable bounds relating to your health, and
 - inform your employer, or any prospective employer, about your health condition if it is relevant or will be relevant to your work
- Refuse to register you

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE