



**TRAINEE SOCIAL WORKER SCHEME:  
Supporting our staff to achieve registration  
as a Social Worker**

**2019 – 2024**

**Final Version**

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## Introduction

A new Trainee Social Worker Scheme, designed specifically for an integrated Health and Social Care service, is being introduced by NHS Highland in summer 2015. This builds on a successful scheme run by The Highland Council between 2002 and 2012.

A number of Social Worker posts are being re-designated as Trainee Social Worker posts. Successful recruits to these will be fully supported to complete the Honours Degree in Social Work programme through distance learning with the Open University. On completion, they will be able to register and work as Social Workers.

## Recruitment and Selection

Established, vacant Social Worker posts have been re-designated by Area Managers for the purpose of Traineeship.

Recruitment to the Trainee Social Worker posts commenced in summer 2015. We know that there is considerable interest from existing staff within NHS Highland and the Highland Council, and hence recruitment to the Trainee Scheme is a process internal to the two partner agencies.

Geographical constraints together with family and domestic commitments mean that distance learning access to Social Work education is ideal for experienced care staff based in Highland. A training partnership with the Open University has been established to enable this.

In addition to meeting academic and Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) entry requirements for the Honours Degree in Social Work, applicants must be able to demonstrate at least one year of practice experience (paid or unpaid) in a social care environment.

The financial cost of supporting Trainee Social Workers to achieve qualification will be met from monies within the re-designated post. This is a significant investment of NHS Highland resources hence priority will be given to applicants who are able to demonstrate a strong commitment to long-term employment with NHS Highland.

The recruitment process will be facilitated by a designated member of staff within the Employment Services Team for Adult Social Care to ensure consistency of advice to all applicants.

Posts will be advertised individually and concurrently. Short-listing and selection will be undertaken by a panel comprising: Team Manager/Advanced Social Work Practitioner of the Team where the post is located, , the Education Manager and the Open University tutor. Applicants may elect to apply for one or more posts in which case separate applications will be submitted.

## **Contract of Employment**

A job and person specification for the Trainee Social Worker post is included at **Appendix A**. The Trainee Social Worker will be employed by NHS Highland on Highland Council Terms and Conditions at HC6 (Spinal Points 24-28). Successful applicants will normally be appointed at Spinal Point 24 and be eligible to receive any annual salary increases that are due. Trainee Social Workers will be paid travel and subsistence in accordance with the Council's Travel and Subsistence Policy with mileage paid at 'Business Mileage' rate; this includes journeys to attend practice placements, tutorials, teaching blocks or other training activity.

All Trainee Social Workers will be subject to the same NHS Highland requirements as other Adult Social Care staff, including matters relating to conduct, discipline and capability

Once the Trainee Social Worker has successfully completed their academic qualification and achieved registration as a Social Worker, the post that had been designated for Traineeship will revert to that of Social Worker. The expectation is that the person will remain in that post and work as a Registered Social Worker, having been issued with a new contract of employment.

Trainee Social Workers are expected to complete their training in three-four years if they embark on the Honours Degree pathway. This will be less than three years if the individual already holds a related, undergraduate degree. In any case, NHS Highland support will be withdrawn after a maximum period of five years.

In accordance with stated policy, NHS Highland will recoup from the Trainee Social Worker, any financial costs of supporting him or her to attain registration as a Social Worker if the individual fails to complete the academic programme or does not take up appointment as a Social Worker. In addition, if the Trainee Social Worker fails to satisfactorily complete the academic course, their contract of employment as a Trainee Social Worker will be terminated and efforts will be made, in accordance with NHS Highland's Redeployment Policy, to redeploy the individual into another post commensurate with their qualifications, skills and experience.

## **Practice Placements**

An important component of the Honours Degree programme is the Practice Placement, which is formally assessed by a qualified Practice Teacher. Trainee Social Workers will undertake two Practice Placements during the course of the Traineeship. This is in accordance with the University's stipulated requirement. All Trainee Social Workers can expect to undertake their Practice Placements within Highland and planning will be undertaken with partners in The Highland Council, Independent and Third Sectors to identify opportunities that enable individuals to meet prescribed training needs. Opportunities for Trainee Social Workers in Highland to "swap" workplaces to enable them to undertake Practice Placements will be maximised.

## **Support for Trainee Social Workers**

The main support for the Trainee Social Worker will come from the team in which they work and from their line manager. Individuals will receive a planned induction, professional supervision and day to day management, support and guidance.

Overall management and coordination of the Trainee Social Work Scheme will be undertaken by the Learning and Development Manager, who will also be responsible for the provision of guidance and support, including one-to-one and peer group sessions for Trainee Social Workers.

There are a small number of employees of NHS Highland, The Highland Council and their partner providers who are undertaking the Honours Degree independently and who may be at various stages in this process. These staff will be invited to participate in peer group sessions run by NHS Highland and The Highland Council for Trainee Social Workers.

NHS HIGHLAND (Highland Council Terms and Conditions)

Job Description

<b>Service:</b>	Operational Units /Adult Social Care
<b>Job Title:</b>	Trainee Social Worker
<b>Grade and Salary:</b>	HC6 Spinal Points 24-28 (£24,929 - £28,013)
<b>Location:</b>	<b>As advertised</b>
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Team Manager</b>
<b>Job Purpose:</b>	To contribute to the provision of a Social Work service.
<b>Key Duties and Responsibilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Work as a member of a multidisciplinary team to undertake assessments in accordance with agreed NHS Highland policies and procedures;</li><li>▪ Contribute to the development, implementation and review of Personal Outcomes Plans ;</li><li>▪ Liaise with statutory, third and independent agencies and professionals to achieve positive outcomes for people;</li><li>▪ Maintain accurate records in accordance with NHS Highland policies and procedures;</li><li>▪ Prepare reports under the direction of a registered Social Worker;</li><li>▪ Participate in internal and external Social Work and multi-disciplinary meetings as directed;</li><li>▪ Carry out lead responsibilities under the direction and supervision of a registered Social Worker;</li><li>▪ Prepare thoroughly for professional supervision; and</li><li>▪ Meet the requirements of the Social Work Honours Degree programme;</li></ul>
<b>Other Duties:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The post holder may be required to undertake any other duties appropriate to the level of the post; and</li><li>▪ Duties and responsibilities will vary from time to time.</li></ul>
<b>Health and Safety:</b>	Health & Safety is an integral part of any role within NHGS the Highland Council. As such we would expect that all employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Be familiar with Violent Incident and Accident reporting procedures and comply with them;</li><li>▪ Undertake a continual programme of Risk Assessment in relation to their role within NHS Highland; and</li><li>▪ Have an understanding of the importance of Health and Safety in the workplace, and familiarise themselves with NHS Highland's Health &amp; Safety Procedures.</li></ul>
<b>Date:</b>	June 2015

## NHS HIGHLAND (Highland Council Terms and Conditions)

### Person Specification

**Service:** Operational Units / Adult Social Care

**Job Title:** Trainee Social Worker

**Location:** As advised

**Date:** June 2015

#### Essential Requirements

- Ability to meet the demands of an Honours Degree Social Work programme by distance learning, including demonstration of literacy and numeracy skills;
- The equivalent of at least one year of experience of work (paid or unpaid) in a social care environment;
- Good communication skills and evidence of potential to reach a high standard of professional verbal and written communication in a range of environments;
- Ability to negotiate and liaise with other professionals and agencies in the interests of service users;
- Ability to work as a member of a team by establishing positive working relationships;
- Confidence and ability in the use of IT systems;
- Suitability to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) on the Social Worker Student part of the Register;
- Good organisational skills and management of the demands of a proportionate workload and study requirements; and
- Ability to travel efficiently to meet operational requirements

## Learning Agreement

### Introduction

NHS Highland is committed to ensuring that its staff work competently and confidently in whatever role they undertake within the organisation.

In Adult Social Care, NHS Highland undertakes to support Trainee Social Workers to achieve a vocational degree in Social Work which is required to secure registration with the Scottish Social Services Council as a Social Worker.

As a Trainee Social Worker, you are being supported to undertake the qualification you need to secure full registration with the SSSC as a Social Worker.

This Agreement sets out what is expected of you (the Trainee) and how the organisation (NHS Highland) will support you to attain your qualification.

### Learning Contract

1. You will registered for the Open University BA (Hons) Social Work (Scotland) by distance learning
2. All fees and expenses in connection with the course will be paid by the service in line with NHS Highland Trainee Social Worker Scheme Guidance
3. The pattern of study is agreed as follows:
4. You are entitled to half a day per week study time allowance per module
5. You will attend all compulsory Open University tutorials
6. You will undertake two Practice Placements during the course of the Traineeship. All Trainee Social Workers can expect to undertake their Practice Placements within Highland. You are not guaranteed a placement in the area where you are working.
7. NHS Highland will support all required periods of assessed practice learning and make available a suitably qualified Practice Educator in accordance with the requirements of the course
8. Except when undertaking practice learning, you will be mentored and supervised by your line manager. In the absence of the line manager, other colleagues will be identified to provide support and guidance. Timetabled supervision should occur at least once every three weeks.

9. Overall management and coordination of the Trainee Social Work Scheme is undertaken by the Education Manager, who is also responsible for the provision of guidance and support, including one-to-one and peer group sessions for Trainee Social Workers
10. You will be required to carry a caseload commensurate with your experience and development
11. You will register with the SSSC as a student Social Worker

### **Failure to make sufficient progress**

In offering you the opportunity to work towards a qualification in Social work, NHS Highland has an expectation that you will use this opportunity responsibly and organise and schedule work so that submission deadlines are adhered to in accordance with the Open University.

#### What will happen if I do not make adequate progress?

Once any concerns are raised about the Trainee's failure to progress satisfactorily, the Open University will immediately alert the Education Manager in NHS Highland's Learning and Development Team.

You and your Line Manager will be contacted for an informal discussion about the situation and an initial Action Plan will be agreed. It is expected that this will be acted upon immediately.

In the event of failure or inability to complete any part of the course as a result of illness or other personal circumstances affecting study, the service will normally support the Trainee to complete up to one resubmission or to repeat a period of practice learning subject to a satisfactory work/study record. Approval to extend the normal period of training must be agreed by operational managers

Failure to achieve qualification as a Social worker in an agreed timescales will result in termination of employment as a Social Worker Trainee.

*I have read and understood the above statements*

*Name:*

*Date:*

