

Progression through the

Social Work Career Grade

Adults and Integrated Care

**Document Control**

The Head of Adults and Integrated Care is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring it is reviewed.

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**INTRODUCTION**

This guidance relates to Social Workers and related professions in Adult Social Care. The guide details the criteria and processes to be followed in order to progress between Social Worker and experienced Social Worker levels. If you are a NQSW, please refer to the separate ASYE guidance document.

All social workers need to be registered with Social Work England to practice. To maintain high standards in social work practice, social workers need to re-register every 12 months, confirm that you continue to meet the professional standards and complete post registration training and learning to meet the criteria of re-registration.

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

The professional standards are the threshold standards necessary for safe and effective practice. They are specialist to the social work profession and apply to all registered social workers in all roles and settings.

The professional standards set out what a social worker in England must know, understand and be able to do after completing their social work education or training.

The standards are underpinned by guidance which is intended to support social workers to understand the standards and to uphold them in their practice so that to ensure you can continue to maintain their registration.

Social Work England have prescribed six standards which need to be demonstrated and upheld in social work practice. These are:

1. Promote the rights, strengths and wellbeing of people, families and communities.
2. Establish and maintain the trust and confidence of people.
3. Be accountable for the quality of my practice and the decisions I make.
4. Maintain my continuing professional development
5. Act safely, respectfully and with professional integrity.
6. Promote ethical practice and report concerns.

**CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)**

Social Work England defines continuing professional development (CPD) as “reflection and learning activity that social workers undertake throughout their career to maintain and improve their practice. By undertaking and recording CPD, Social Workers demonstrate that they uphold professional standards and continue to remain fit to practice.”

Social Work England’s approach to CPD allows for:

• online ‘on the go’ recording on your Social Work England account;

• a focus on reflection and impact on practice;

• opportunities to detail the learning and reflection already undertaking in other post-qualifying activities; and

• a variety of file uploads and reflection formats to suit different needs and styles of learning.

At the end of the year Social Work England will carry out a number of CPD validation audits to establish whether continuing professional development (CPD) is sufficient to support continued registration. It is very important that you maintain this as part of your professional development and for future renewal. Recording online CPD at least once a quarter as a minimum would be considered good practice.

**Professional Capabilities Framework**

This guidance also reflects the national Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) for Social Workers, which sets out the profession’s expectations of what a Social Worker should be able to do at each stage in their career and professional development.

The benefit of the PCF is that social workers are no longer in the dark about their skills gaps, it makes it clear what is needed to be demonstrated to progress and also have a clearer idea as to what they need to do to enable them to do that.

The PCF comprises nine capabilities which are interdependent and interact in professional practice, so there are overlaps between the capabilities, and many issues will be relevant to more than one capability.

The Professional Capabilities Framework is as follows:

1. **Professionalism:** Identify and behave as a professional social worker, committed to professional development
2. **Values and Ethics:** Apply social work ethical principles and values to guide professional practice
3. **Diversity:** Recognise diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles in practice
4. **Rights, Justice and Economic Wellbeing:** Advance human rights, and promote social justice and economic wellbeing
5. **Knowledge:** Apply knowledge of social sciences, law and social work practice theory
6. **Critical Reflection and Analysis:** Apply critical reflection ad analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision making
7. **Intervention and Skills:** Use judgement and authority to intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support and prevent harm, neglect and abuse
8. **Contexts and Organisations:** Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing contexts that shape practice. Operate effectively within own organisational frameworks and contribute to the development of services and organisations. Operate effectively within multi-agency and inter-professional partnerships and settings
9. **Professional Leadership:** Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others through supervision, mentoring, assessing, research, teaching, leadership and management

Progression between levels is characterised by development in terms of:

* Level of confidence, underpinned by practice experience, reflection and deepening understanding
* The increasing ability to work independently and to collaborate on equal terms with members of other professions
* The quality of the judgements made, and the level of ability to explain and justify them
* Efficiency of the work undertaken and the outcomes achieved, including opportunities for preventive work
* The ability to take initiative, form constructive alliances and to act as a change agent
* The ability to engage effectively with situations of increasing complexity and challenge, for example those with:
  + Multi-agency input
  + Complex family / organisational dynamics
  + Serious hostility and conflicts of interest
  + Multiple problems / disadvantages
  + Multiple / significant risk factors
  + Need to take into account the public interest
* The appropriate use of authority and challenge
* The ability and commitment to educate and provide professional supervision to others
* Demonstration of leadership, management and research

The Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) for Social Workers in Adult Services which sets out a national framework for the assessment of Social Worker’s at the end of their first year post qualification and / or the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) is relevant and applicable to this progression framework . The KSS is/will be used as a method of assessment in conjunction with the PCF’s at the end of the first year of qualified practice it. It also forms the basis of our Employee Performance Management (EPM) within Adults and Integrated Care

The career grade for Social Workers was revised as part of the South Tyneside job evaluation process to provide effective career pathways for Social Workers. There are bars positioned at SCPs 28, 30 and 32.

\*In respect to the COVID-19 emergency period, with effect from 14th April 2020, Adults and Integrated Care have temporarily moved to a seven-day working pilot. To reflect this, we have agreed an all-inclusive rate of pay equivalent to + two SCP for staff working within this pilot.

**Social Work Career Grade Progression Framework**

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| **Level** | **Job Evaluation Salary Band SCP – 20/21** | **\*Seven-Day Working Pilot - All Inclusive Rates of Pay from 14/4/20 during period of COVID19** | **Expectations and Eligibility** |
| Level 1  NQSW / ASYE | SCP 26 – 28 (Bar at 28)  SCP 26 - £32,909  SCP 27 - £33,820  SCP 28 - £34,723 | (AI+2 / 28) - £34,723  (AI+2 / 29) - £35,411  (AI+2 / 30) - £36,298 | Any newly qualified social worker will commence at Level 1 entry level. It would depend upon their experience and the qualifications they bring (assessed at interview) at what SCP they would commence on. (Please seek advice from the Business Change Manager). A newly qualified social worker will be expected to undertake a number of induction activities and complete a portfolio of evidence to be approved at panel at the end of their first 12 months in service. This ASYE Induction Portfolio is based on recognised best practice.  In order to progress through the Bar, at this point ASYE social workers should have consistently demonstrated practice in a wider range of tasks and roles, and have become more effective in their interventions, thus building their own confidence, and earning the confidence of others. They will have more experience and skills in relation to a particular setting and user group, and have demonstrated ability to work effectively on more complex situations. They will seek support in supervision appropriately, whilst starting to exercise initiative and evaluate their own practice. |
| Level 2  Social Worker | SCP 29 – 30 (Bar at 30)  SCP 29 - £35,411  SCP 30 - £36,298 | (AI+2 / 31) – £37,261  (AI+2 / 32) - £38,296 | In the role, Social Workers will progress to practice effectively, exercising higher quality judgements, in situations of increasing complexity, risk, uncertainty and challenge. Through growing understanding they expect and anticipate, but do not pre-judge the issues that may develop.  They will have greater confidence and independence (whilst accessing support where needed), and use their initiative to broaden their repertoire of responses; they have expertise in one or more areas of practice, be familiar with local resource networks and be recognised by peers as a source of reliable knowledge and advice.  Social Workers wishing to progress through the Bar to a Level 3 Social Worker must have completed 2 years of practice post ASYE and demonstrate the appropriate work based learning which is required to gain social work progression.  A recommendation for progression should result from a successful review under the EPM framework, when the line manager feels that the required level of professional, behavioural and technical capabilities have been achieved against the Key Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) and outlined within our Behaviour Framework – Moving Forward Together; Our Values; Our Behaviour; Our Future.  It is expected that social workers will be able to demonstrate that they have progressed through the ASYE and undertaken further relevant CPD programmes such as PQ, Safeguarding Module or Best Interest Assessor Training. Furthermore they would need to demonstrate attendance at relevant internal training programmes and have consistently demonstrated that they fulfil the requirements of the Professional Capability Framework matrix at experienced social work level and continued to progress against the Knowledge and Skills standards. The progression panel will audit 3 case files, meet with the applicant to review the evidence submitted, alongside an assessment completed by the Operations Manager. They will form a view and make an endorsement. The results of the application will be notified to the applicant. |
| Level 3 Social Worker | SCP 31 - 36 (Bar at 32)  SCP 31 - £37,261  SCP 32 - £38,296  SCP 33 - £39,493  SCP 34 - £40,478 | (AI+2 / 33) - £39,493  (AI+2 / 34) - £40,478  (AI+2 / 35) - £41,496  (AI+2 / 36) – £42,503 | Experienced social workers are more autonomous in their role. They demonstrate expert and effective practice in complex situations, assessing and managing higher levels of risk, striking a balance between support and control, liaising with a wide range of professionals, including more senior levels. They manage complex caseloads, and offer expert opinion within the organisation and to others.  They chair a range of meetings, offer expert support to case conferences, and produce high quality assessments and reports for a range of functions. They model good practice, setting expectations for others. They start to take responsibility and are accountable for the practice of others, mentoring newly qualified workers, and supervision of the work of junior staff.  Once having progressed through the bar, Social workers have the opportunity to access further SCP by demonstrating additional competence and capability through their practice and through completion of the following additional academic attainment.  SCP 33 for Completion of Stage 1 Practice Educators Award  SCP 34 for Completion of Stage 2 Practice Educators Award |
| Approved Mental Health Practitioner | SCP 37 - £43,516 |  | The primary role of an AMHP is to conduct an assessment of an individual in order to make decisions about whether it is necessary and appropriate to consider a detention under the Mental Health Act. Central to this is the ability to make sound legal decisions around the use of compulsory powers in a way that is lawful and promotes the autonomy of the individual, while safeguarding the person, the family and the wider public.  The AMHP role is a complex one. It is also unique among the tasks of social workers and other mental health professionals in that the AMHP is acting as an autonomous professional rather than an agent of their employers. AMHP’s undergo extensive training and therefore must have in-depth knowledge of the law to ensure the rights of those being assessed are protected. Written evidence of completion from the university board should be obtained before warranty in order to practice is obtained.  Progression to an AMHP role is dependent on a vacant post being available and access to the vacancy is by application and recruitment selection only. |
| Advanced Practitioners | SCP 37 - £43,516  SCP 39 - £45,495 |  | Advanced Practitioners are responsible for developing and disseminating specialist practice, process and performance knowledge and skills within the team, providing specialist advice and guidance. They have a leading role to play in mentoring, motivating and inspiring our practitioners to deliver Adult Social Care best practice.  It is expected that Advanced Practitioners are able to demonstrate that they have undertaken further relevant PQ and CPD programmes such as Practice Educator, Approved Mental Health Practitioner and Best Interest Assessor.  Progression to an Advanced Practitioner role is dependent on a vacant post being available and access to the vacancy is by application and recruitment selection only.  AMHP – Those Advanced Practitioners who are also Approved Mental Health Practitioners are eligible to obtain 2 additional increments to SCP 39 if they obtain warranty. (Only AMHP are eligible to go to this SCP.) |

**Progression Process**

The agreed process for progression is through the mandatory supervision process, employee performance management (EMP) and observation by the line manager who should consider whether a person is demonstrating the capabilities of a Social Worker and is therefore ready to move on to demonstrate the capabilities of a Level 3 Experienced Social Worker. A recommendation will then be made to the Operations Manager for formal endorsement, prior to the completion of the Portfolio for Career Progression.

Preparation for social work progression is a part of the Social Workers continuing professional development. CPD is the responsibility of the Social Worker by regularly seeking out and participating in developmental opportunities as their career progresses. The line manager’s role is to support the Social Worker through supervision, employee performance management and to provide sufficient opportunities for development.

**Progression Panel**

Once a line manager feels able to support a Social Workers progression, with the agreement of the Operations Manager the Portfolio for Career Progression should be completed. This requires the Operations Managers support and recommendation and should be linked to the Social Workers EPM.

The progression panel will take place 3 times per year in February, June and October. 2 copies of the portfolio will need to be submitted to the Principal Social Worker 2 weeks in advance of these dates in order that the panel can be convened. The Social Worker and their respective Operations Manager will be expected to attend the panel. The panel will be used to explore the evidence provided by both the Operations Manager and the Social Worker and will consider all the information presented and make a recommendation as to whether the Social Worker is ready to progress to the role of Experienced Social Worker.

The Portfolio for Career Progression will consist of:

* Confidentiality Statement
* Learning Agreement
* Supervision Log
* Key learning reflection
* Up to date CPD profile
* 3 Direct Observations of Practice
* Professional Capabilities Reflective Account
* Reflective Case Study
* 3 Case File Audits

Social Workers will be asked to demonstrate how they apply in practice the Professional Capabilities Framework and Knowledge and Skills Statement for Social Workers in Adult Services.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome in writing within 5 working days of the date of the panel. If the Social Worker successfully meets the progression requirements then the Principal Social Worker will notify the HR Employment Team and arrangements will be made to make the necessary salary adjustments. Payment will be backdated to the date of the panel.

If it is determined by the panel that the Social Worker is not yet ready to progress and needs to undertake some additional pieces of work or gain more experience in certain areas of work, the panel will provide a written report. A development plan will be agreed and developed jointly by the Operations Manager and the Social Worker with specific timescales attached. This will be monitored in supervision by the line manager and it is the Operations Managers responsibility for deciding if and when the Social Worker is ready to re-submit to the next progression panel, based on a further recommendation by the line manager.

In the event of any disagreement, the Social Worker will have the right to submit their written comments to the Chair of the panel within 10 working days of receiving notification of the results of the panel. A response will be provided in writing within 10 working days.