

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SCHEME FOR SECONDMENT TO THE DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL WORK
From: JIM DICKIE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 28 TH FEBRUARY 2002	Ref: AJ/LB	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To provide Committee with information about the current secondment scheme to the Diploma in Social Work.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is a current national shortage of qualified social workers. As a result the Department has been considering various strategies to address this problem
- 2.2 There is frequently interest from staff within the Department in undertaking the social work qualification (Diploma in Social Work). These are staff who have worked within the Department for some time and have a realistic viewpoint of the current demands of the social worker role. However, the majority of staff are not in a position to give up their employment to undertake full time training
- 2.2 This left a potential valuable market of social work trainees untapped.
- 2.3 A best value investigation was carried out to identify whether it was feasible for existing unqualified staff within the Department to undertake this training

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 A suitable Diploma in Social Work programme was available on an open learning basis, through Robert Gordon University. This also offered the opportunity to experienced staff who had undertaken appropriate training to enter the programme at the half way point. The course would therefore take 18 months rather than 3 years with students carrying out the majority of study in their own time.
- 3.2 Initially only staff who had undertaken a relevant degree would be eligible to undertake this programme.
- 3.3 The Department was keen to ensure all staff had equal opportunity to access this programme. Therefore the Training section within the Department, successfully applied to the Open University to gain acceptance to offer the additional training modules which would fulfil Robert Gordon University criteria for advanced entry. These Open University modules are now available to staff on an in-service basis and will be used to provide essential training for staff holding unqualified posts within the Department.

3.4 Staff wishing to undertake the Diploma in Social Work qualification undergo an internal selection process to determine their suitability for the training. In return for Departmental support, staff require to sign an undertaking to remain within the Department for two years on completion of their qualification

3.5 At present 6 staff are undertaking the University programme, 2 are expected to complete this year. 4 staff are due to complete next year.

3.6 A further 4 staff have just successfully completed the Departmental selection process.

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS.

4.1. There is considerable interest in the scheme and it is expected to generate an additional supply of social workers who are committed to the Department

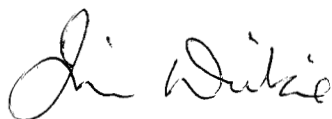
4.2 The scheme makes a significant contribution to the recruitment of qualified Social workers within a situation of national shortage.

4.3 The costs are met from the existing training budget

4.4 There are no legal implications

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to note the contribution this scheme makes to the recruitment of key qualified staff within the Department.



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Director of Social Work
6TH February 2002

For further information on this report please contact Alison Jack, Service Manager, Training
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