

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL CONSULTATION – PHASE TWO – ADULT RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 30 OCTOBER 2003	Ref: AJ/LB	

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION**

1.1. To provide Committee with information about the response to the above consultation exercise

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) was established in October 2001, as part of the current drive to promote high standards of practice among social service workers.
- 2.2. As part of its remit, the SSSC is establishing a register of workers within Social Services.
- 2.3. Social Service Workers will be registered in phases.
- 2.4. Phase 1 registrations applies all workers who hold a social work qualification, all heads of residential homes for adults or children and heads of adult day services and residential child care workers.
- 2.5. Staff within these categories, are registered on the basis of attainment of specific qualifications and evidence of good character.
- 2.6. Staff within these categories will begin to register in the North Lanarkshire Council area from November 2004.
- 2.7. For each phase of registration the SSSC consults with employers regarding the appropriate qualification criteria that is relevant to the tasks that staff within each category undertake.
- 2.8. The current consultation covers staff who are employed within residential services for adults.
- 2.9. The comments made by the Social Work Department are attached, and a copy of the Consultation document and response is lodged in the members’ library.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. The Committee is requested to:

- (i) Homologate the comments made.
- (ii) Remit the report to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) sub-committee for their interest.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> October 2003**

*For further information on this report please contact Alison Jack, Service Manager, Training  
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# **SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL**

## **CONSULTATION ON QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PHASE TWO REGISTRATION WITH THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL – ADULT RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKERS**

## **Proposed qualifications requirements for the registration of workers who form part of the second phase of registration – Adult Residential Care**

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is a non-departmental public body established by the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

The SSSC began its work on 1 October 2001. It has a remit covering Scotland and also works closely with the General Social Care Council, The Northern Ireland Social Care Council and the Care Council for Wales.

### **Authority**

Part 3 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 established the Scottish Social Services Council. The Act also requires the SSSC to promote high standards of conduct and practice among social service workers and high standards in their training. This will be achieved through:

- Establishing registers of key groups of staff
- Publishing codes of practice for social service workers and their employers
- Regulating the education and training of the workforce
- Undertaking the functions of the former National Training Organisation. These include workforce planning, qualifications and standards development.

### **Proposed qualifications requirements**

The SSSC will set qualifications criteria as part of the eligibility criteria for entry to the register. The proposed qualifications criteria for social service workers in Phase One of registration were developed following extensive work with the predecessor body, CCETSW/TOPSS in Scotland and consultation with colleagues in other Councils in the UK. A similar exercise is being carried out for Phase Two.

The SSSC has taken note of the views of existing bodies with interest in the sector and these will inform the final decisions taken about qualifications required to register with the SSSC.

The SSSC and the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (Care Commission) work closely together to ensure that employers and workers understand their responsibilities in relation to the Codes of Practice. These include responsibilities for providing and using appropriate supervision, training and staff development opportunities.

In Scotland the categories of worker who will be registered in Phase Two of registration have been set by the Scottish Executive. They are all workers in adult residential care and all early education and child care workers.

This paper concentrates upon the qualifications for workers in adult residential care. A separate paper focuses upon early education and child care workers. Qualifications for managers in adult residential care were established in Phase One.

## **Approach**

Qualifications play an important role in ensuring the delivery of quality services and outcomes for those who use adult residential care services.

In developing the proposed qualifications framework for workers in adult residential care, the Council will take account of the diverse nature of work in this sector. It is evident that a range of terminology is used to describe the same or broadly similar jobs. There are also people with different job titles doing the same job.

## **Qualifications and fitness to practice**

The Council will take into account in its consultation all the functions that staff are required to carry out in adult residential care, to ensure that service users' and carers' needs are met effectively and consistently.

Although SVQs and HNCs are the most common qualifications gained a range of qualifications are currently used in this sector. More details of these can be obtained from the SSSC website [www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com) or by telephoning Lorraine Gray on 01382 207101.

## **Principles**

The Council proposes to use the following principles to determine the qualifications required by registrants to register with the SSSC:

1. Integration of practice and learning.
2. Recognition within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).
3. Importance of underpinning knowledge and value base that is consistent with the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers.

## **The scope of the Adult Residential Care workforce**

Workers employed in adult residential care have a number of different job titles. Some of the most commonly used titles are listed below. The SSSC is aware that there may be other titles used in the sector. The qualifications criteria for managers have already been agreed by the SSSC.

Care Assistant

Care Officer

Care Worker

Community Care Assistant

Outreach Worker

Project Worker

Residential Care Assistant

Residential Care Officer

Residential Care Worker

Residential Worker

Social Services Worker

Welfare Assistant

Senior Care Worker

Support Worker

Supervisor

Team leader

## Consultation questions on the qualifications criteria

Views are sought on the following:

<p><b>1a. Are the principles set out on page 3 appropriate to the needs of the adult residential care workforce? (please tick)</b></p> <p><b>Yes</b>            <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>No</b></p> <p><b>Don't know</b></p>
<p><b>1b. Please comment on your answer.</b></p> <p>Principles are appropriate and consistent with phase 1 registration requirements</p>
<p><b>2a. It is important that we define the scope of the workforce by obtaining an accurate picture of the range of job titles used within the sector.</b></p> <p><b>Do the job titles set out on page 4 describe fully the range of job titles used within the sector? (please tick)</b></p> <p><b>Yes</b></p> <p><b>No</b>            <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Don't know</b></p>
<p><b>2b. What other job titles should be included?</b></p> <p><b>Social Care Worker</b> <b>Senior Social Care Worker</b> <b>Support Assistant</b> <b>Senior Care Officer</b></p> <p>It is noted that there is a wide range of job titles and functions across adult residential care services and that job titles are only indicative of these functions and cannot reflect the range of duties. The inclusion of a wide range of posts as "frontline staff" also contributes to this confusion. There can be quite a difference in function between a health care worker, a care worker and social care worker, who would all be classed as front line workers in that they do not supervise staff, but might merit a different level of qualification as a result of their remit</p> <p>It is therefore suggested that in addition to likely job titles, a range of functions</p>

are also described to reflect the responsibility and autonomy with which workers are expected to operate and workers are registered according to this function. For example there has been recent classification by the Scottish Executive, of the "Care Home Workforce" defining at one level a Care Assistant as someone who provides direct personal, physical, emotional, social or health care and support to service users and are accountable for dealing with routine aspects of a care plan or service. This was seen as equating to an SVQ Level 2 qualification.

The next level above referred to staff who, participate in or are responsible for the assessment of care needs; the development of care plans; the delivery of care and services and the monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of care and services. This equated to a level three SVQ qualification This would seem more useful for employers and allow a correct targetting of qualification to reflect these duties. Where agencies require their frontline or basic grade staff to fulfil higher level duties, they would then be able to ensure that they recruit and train staff at an appropriate level to ensure a good quality service.

If staff are trained to fulfil function it would be easier for employers and staff should they wish to transfer from e.g. adult services to children services as the basic components would already be assessed and any specialist training could be gained afterwards.

### **3. What qualifications do you think should be expected for the following workers to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council?**

- **Frontline workers** (by this we mean staff who provide direct personal support to users of the service).

These questions provoked debate within the Department as the duties of front line staff encompass more than direct personal support. This statement is particularly pertinent in adult services where residential services emphasise the development of independent living skills. The inclusion of the term support as opposed to care also widens the functions for example staff carrying out duties under driver escort often fulfil direct support roles.

The Department to date has pursued an SVQ Level 3 qualification for staff within adult and older people's services. It has been seen that the duties of basic grade staff require more advanced skills than are offered by the SVQ Level 2 qualification for the following reasons.

- ◆ The Department operates a keyworker system which requires basic grade staff to develop relationships with service users, carry out assessments and generate care plans, and in the case of adult services these require to be person centred plans to independence.
- ◆ Staff at basic grade level are required to use advanced communication skills, be adaptable to variable levels of dependency and confusion and use their

initiative to develop a responsive care relationship, which also enables the appropriate involvement of family members.

- ◆ It is also important that staff employed in social care settings are conscious of the impact of their own values and actions upon the service user group and other workers. Understanding the rationale behind their work is high priority and the ability to interpret situations, behaviours and attitudes is an intrinsic component of their role.

SVQ was chosen as the qualification over the HNC as the placement period within the HNC does not allow for sufficient experience to develop staff skills to the appropriate level.

**As a result the Department response is that a minimum of SVQ Level 3 is required within adult residential care services for basic grade staff who do not carry supervisory responsibility.**

It should also be noted that there are some posts, although not within this authority, who only provide direct care to service users e.g. care **assistant** posts for whom a level 2 qualification would be acceptable. If a distinction is made in regard to function rather than job title as suggested earlier, it would help to ensure that the social services workforce is a skilled workforce providing a high standard of care and that not all basic grade posts are subsumed under the SVQ Level 2 qualification.

It is suggested that the previous categories contained under the care component of the managers qualification which are higher than SVQ Level 3 are valid and that the range of qualifications acceptable for basic grade staff would be :

- ◆ Diploma in Social Work or equivalent **or**
- ◆ SVQ in Care at level 4 **or**
- ◆ Qualification meeting the registration requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Council, General medical Council or professional groups regulated by the Health Professions Council:
  - ◆ Occupational therapists
  - ◆ Physiotherapists
  - ◆ Speech and Language therapists **or**
- ◆ SVQ in Care, or Promoting Independence or Supported Living at Level 3

All the above qualifications show integration of practice and learning

**Please see comments at end regarding recruitment of staff**

- **Supervisors** (by this we mean senior care staff with supervisory responsibilities whose job titles may vary across the sector).

In view of the above discussion it was felt that supervisors needed to adopt a similar structure and that the minimum standard would be Level 4 in Care which encompassed the management options or Level 3 in Care plus a management qualification

The qualification criteria would read

1. Diploma in Social Work or equivalent **or**
2. SVQ in Care at level 4 (encompassing the management options) **or**
3. Qualification meeting the registration requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Council, General medical Council or professional groups regulated by the Health Professions Council:
  - ◆ Occupational therapists
  - ◆ Physiotherapists
  - ◆ Speech and Language therapists

**plus a management qualification at SCQF Level 6**

4. SVQ in Care, or Promoting Independence or Supported Living at Level 3

**plus a management qualification at SCQF Level 6**

i.e. qualifications 3 & 4 would require a management qualification in addition to the care qualification

**Please add any additional comments here**

**Recruitment of staff**

Recruitment of suitably qualified staff has been problematic within residential care services. It is recognised that setting an SVQ qualification as a minimum could contribute to the problem as it is difficult to attain an SVQ qualification at Level 2 or 3 outwith a workplace setting. As many staff come to posts within residential care as their first post in social services this would appear a valuable avenue to maintain. It is therefore suggested that staff could continue to be appointed on a temporary basis and work towards the appropriate qualification within a specified timescale. It is suggested that once the registration period is complete a registered establishment i.e. once receiving a positive inspection from the SCSC could appoint a small proportion of their staff complement as trainees for a probationary period of two years maximum while they attain the relevant qualification.

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Can you describe briefly the range of services your organisation provides?

Questionnaires should be returned by 6 October 2003 to:

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11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

This consultation is also available and can be completed online from our website  
**[www.sssc.uk.com](http://www.sssc.uk.com)**.