

**Study of Post-qualifying Social Work Education in Scotland 2001 – 2008**

## **Background to the Research**

The Post-qualifying Consortium for Social Work in Scotland (PQCSWS) operated from 2001 to 2008. It was part of a UK-wide Post-Qualifying Framework of Post-qualifying and Advanced Awards for social workers that provided the context of Continuing Professional Development [CPD] for qualified social workers. A review of the Post-qualifying Framework in Scotland led the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC, 2004a) to develop a wider continuing professional development (CPD) strategy for the whole social services workforce (SSSC 2004b). The PQCSWS closed in 2008 although the equivalent councils for England, Wales and Northern Ireland have continued to operate a framework for post-qualifying study.

In Scotland two key areas have so far been defined as Specialist Courses (SSSC 2005) which must be provided through partnerships of employers and educational providers. These programmes need to be validated through a university and accredited at SCQF<sup>1</sup> levels to meet the specific Standards Framework designated by the SSSC and Scottish Government, and be approved and quality-assured as a Specialist Course by the SSSC. The two areas developed so far are the Practice Learning Qualifications (SS) and the Mental Health Officer Award.

Moreover, these designated Specialist Courses cover significant areas but are only a small part of the range of programmes previously accredited in Scotland within the PQ Framework. Most of that range of programmes is continuing at present having been revalidated by the universities as awarding bodies. However, anecdotally, agencies have expressed concerns about the effectiveness of some partnership arrangements to influence the programmes. Areas they have mentioned as being less than satisfactory for them are: course content, development and relevance to the learning needs of employees, lack of attention to operational issues related to service delivery and poor transfer of learning into improved outcomes for service users and carers. The only aspect of the new arrangements which exerts pressure for involvement and compliance with the specialist programmes are the Post-Registration Training and Learning Requirements set by SSSC<sup>2</sup> for continuation of social services staff in each section of the qualifications-based register.

It is notable that the other three countries of the UK have now developed revised PQ Frameworks following their reviews. Within these, universities are the awarding bodies and operational partnerships are the mechanisms which are developing the programmes and the arrangements for their delivery and implementation. In Northern Ireland the Social Care Council, the PQ

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<sup>1</sup> SCQF: Scottish Curriculum and Qualifications Framework

<sup>2</sup> Post-Registration Training and Learning Rules, (undated) SSSC

Education and Training partnership and employers have an agreed policy of time-scales and criteria within which all staff must progress through the revised PQ Frameworks which are conditional for continuing professional registration. Employers are fully involved in the partnership, and are full partners in programme delivery.

The Post-Qualifying Awards for the UK, (PQSW Part One, and the full PQ award) and the Advanced Award (AASW) were built on two levels of competence and academic credit<sup>3</sup>: The Awards were open to all staff in the personal social services – statutory, voluntary and private sectors - who held a professional social work qualification. The Framework had four main aims

- To recognise and validate the professional development of qualified social workers;
- To ensure common minimum standards across a wide variety of social work education and training at this level, in different sectors and settings;
- To provide structures for post qualifying education and training which are flexible and responsive to the changing needs of service delivery, to different career pathways, and to the requirements of regulatory bodies;
- To promote education, training and qualifications that support high standards of service and care in the personal social services.

During the life of the PQCSWS candidates made submissions for assessment towards one of the PQ Awards through one of two routes:

- 1) Programmes accredited by higher education institutions
- 2) An individual route where candidates submitted portfolios of work to an assessment panel operated by the PQCSWS.

The closure of the PQCSWS in March 2008 provided an excellent opportunity to examine the impact of social workers' post-qualifying learning and to contribute to the body of knowledge on strategic and operational factors that can impact on post-qualification learning. The Management Committee of the

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<sup>3</sup> The PQ Framework set out the Requirements for Awards at two levels: the PQ Award which was set at Level 9/10 of the SCQF, the level of the third/ fourth year of an honours degree in Scotland) and the Advanced Award which was set at Level 11 (Masters level) of the SCQF. The requirements are set out in Appendix 2.

PQCSWS and the SSSC combined to fund this study to ensure that good use is made of the accumulated data on PQ social work education Scotland for this period.

### **Purpose of the Research**

The overarching aim of the study was to gain insight into the experience of candidates, the barriers and facilitators to undertaking PQ study and attempt to identify the impact of PQ social work education to help to inform future developments in workplace learning.

The objectives for the study were to:

1. Obtain a profile of the candidates who have undertaken post-qualifying (PQ) study social in Scotland
2. Explore the experience of candidates assessed through programmes and the individual route
3. Identify the impact of PQ social work education

### **Study Methods**

The study was conducted in three phases:

Phase 1 ran from December 2007 to March 2008. It was a survey of candidates (n=99) on their experiences of undertaking a PQ award. The findings from this stage of the study were presented by Mary Coles, PQCSW Manager, Kate Skinner, then from the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS) at a PQCSWS event in March 2008.

Phase 2 ran during April and May 2009. It comprised a selective literature review on post-qualifying social work study and its impact on practice and its purpose was to establish a wider context for the findings. This review was conducted by Mary Coles, formerly PQCSW manager.

Phase 3 ran during September and October 2009. It was based on semi-structured telephone interviews with candidates (n = 35) and where possible their managers (n=6) and examined the facilitators and barriers to undertaking PQ education.

## **What does the literature say?**

Three bodies of literature are relevant to and inform the study: models of evaluating the impact of training and education, the literature on Continuous Professional Development and post-qualifying education and the literature on the transfer of learning.

## **Evaluating impact**

Kirkpatrick's Model (1994) evaluates learning and development activity at four levels. These are:

1. Learners' reactions to the learning activity
2. Learning and modifications in attitudes and perceptions acquired from the learning activity as identified by participants
3. Changes in behaviour or practice in the workplace
4. Changes to organisations' practices: and in social services this could be translated as improvements in outcomes for service users.

The limitations of this approach to evaluation include its linear assumption that impact on practice is attributed to the education or training. For most organisations, learning and training is unlikely to be the only influence experienced by staff, so it is not always easy to conclude that changes in behaviour or practice, and thus to organisational processes or outcomes for service users, are due solely to a learning or development activity. However the model offers the advantage of offering different levels of evaluation and, in Levels Three and Four the model reaches beyond self-report, which has significant limitations as a source of accurate and complete data.

There are ways to overcome the limitations of the model such as making evaluation integral to the educational programme and going beyond self-reported data to gather data not only from participants but from their line managers, colleagues, documentary material and the views of service users and their carers that could provide and support evidence of impact on behaviour and practice.

In this study four-level evaluation was not integral to the programmes and pathways that led to the various PQ awards. In addition the lapse of time between the period of study and the gathering of the data, the difficulty of tracing candidates for the PQ awards and our limited access to past candidates and their managers impacted on the type and depth of data we were able to collect. However we did attempt to go beyond Levels 1 and 2 and made attempts to assess whether there were changes in candidates' behaviour that could be evidenced from other sources than self-reports. It was

beyond the scope of this study to evaluate whether there were any changes in organisational practices as a result of candidates completing the various educational programmes offered under the PQ framework.

### **CPD and PQ education**

Brown, Keen and Rutter suggest that CPD needs to be extended from a joint responsibility between individuals and employers to being a three-way partnership involving employers, practitioners and educational providers (2006). Rather than this three-way relationship being one of tension they suggest it become a partnership of shared power in which the providers of CPD opportunities act as 'brokers', working in partnership with practitioners and employers. (Brown, Keen and Rutter, 2006:5)

Approaches to workplace learning are discussed by Menmuir, Thomson and Stark in their consideration of Partnership in Professional Development through Work-Based Learning Agreements (1998). These approaches are taken forward by the SSSC in Promoting Workplace Learning (Menmuir and Thomson 2006) which draws on evidence from case studies to set out the benefits and associated difficulties of workplace learning for organisations, staff and service users. These approaches are likely to continue to be key in the implementation of the CPD Strategy for the social service workforce (SSSC, 2004) and specifically for registered social workers as there is no longer a Framework of Post-Qualifying Awards through which their CPD pathways may be navigated.

The concept of CPD as on-going learning and development to improve and extend professional practice throughout an individual's career was central to the PQ Framework. The PQ framework was designed to support candidates with the processes of 'reflection', 'reflective practice', 'critical reflection', 'reflexivity', 'writing reflexively' and 'transfer of learning into practice'. Thus in the context of CPD transfer of learning could be said to occur when a social worker applies what she or he has learned from earlier practice problems to a new one; or when new learning from a study programme such as a developed theoretical approach or the findings of a relevant research study are tested out or applied to a familiar practice situation, set of problems or processes in the learner's professional context.

### **Learning Transfer**

Ogilvie-Whyte (2006), examining learning outcomes in child protection practice, argued that there is:

'a paucity of evidence about whether training and education can directly impact upon practice.'

(Ogilvie-Whyte, 2006, P 2)

Certainly there are many methodological issues in linking cause and effect in the transfer of learning from a learning event to practice, not least of which is isolating the many variables that affect practitioners and managers in their daily work. These include policy, procedures, organisational processes as givens in any organisational environment, but also include the influences of pressure of work, complex service users' situations and high public expectations (Skinner and Bell, 2007).

However, Alvarez, Salas and Garafano suggest there are three key sets of factors that affect transfer of learning or training and also provide an integrated model for the evaluation of its effectiveness (2004). Learner characteristics such as individuals' ability to affect their performance are most frequently perceived as influencing learning or training outcomes. Fairly well-established as being significant factors in terms of learner characteristics are cognitive ability, self-efficacy, pre-training motivation, anxiety or negative affectivity, perceived utility, value or relevance, career planning, openness of experience and organisational commitment (Burke and Hutchins, 2007; Macaulay in Cree and Macaulay, 2000). Motivation and capacity are key here, as learners seek out relevant knowledge to solve problems and develop their professional practice.

Training or learning intervention design and delivery is the second set of factors that influence transfer of learning into the workplace. These include learning goals, content relevance, practice and feedback, modelling and examples (sometimes ones which point to errors or poor outcomes). Work environment influences are the third set of key factors associated with affecting transfer of learning or training – transfer climate, supervisory support, peer support and opportunity to perform have been shown to have a significant influence (Burke and Hutchins, 2007).

The literature then suggests that in order to maximise the transfer of learning there needs to be a supportive and sustainable CPD culture and workplace learning environment that requires the active involvement of all parts of the organisation. Key to creating the right climates are colleagues, line managers and supervisors and a learning culture needs to be underpinned by concrete arrangements for workplace study facilities, access to research and library resources, administrative support for word processing and the use of agency time for study (Cooper and Rixon 2001).

Govier suggests that there is a balance of responsibility between learners and employing organisations for creating and sustaining a culture of reflective practice, identifying professional development needs and enabling staff to have appropriate learning and development opportunities (1999). In relation to the PQ framework and CPD policy and practice in Scotland the balance of responsibility could be argued to be between the motivational factors in

candidates/learners, the design or implementation of formal arrangements for post-qualifying development, study and awards and the culture of the organisational and policy environment in terms of encouragement, support, and regulatory requirements.

## **Findings from Phases One and Three**

### **Facilitators and barriers**

Candidates were surveyed and interviewed about their experiences of undertaking a PQ award, in particular factors that helped or hindered, mentoring, financial resources, employer support, and perceived impact of gaining an award. The findings from Phase One (survey of candidates) echoed and supported those from Phase Three (interviews with candidates and managers).

- Factors that helped them in their study were:
- Release from duties
- Support at home
- Support from colleagues and/or their line manager
- The method of study i.e. it was an accredited programme.

Getting release from duties and or being given workload relief during their period of study was considered one of the most important factors. Employer support came in various forms with around half getting study leave, with a smaller number getting some level of workload relief. Around a quarter specifically mentioned access to educational resources through their employers (books or other materials) or educational support through their Training or Learning and Development colleagues. In a review of PQ education and learning McCloskey (2006) found these issues to be of crucial significance to learners. Financial support also featured as an important factor. Around one third of candidates had received a bursary from the PQCSWS, the majority of whom used it to pay university fees for accredited programmes and the others used it to pay for the support of a mentor. Around one third received some funding from their employer towards the cost of their programmes.

Factors that hindered them in their study:

- Feeling unsupported at work
- Having no workload relief
- A change to their role or responsibilities during their period of study

- Problems relating to their mentor or with the PQCSWS.

Around half of the total sample had had a mentor, and the majority of candidates had identified their own mentor with the PQCSWS finding a mentor for around a quarter of the candidates interviewed. The experiences of having a mentor were largely positive, with over half finding their mentor very useful. Positive comments about mentors included that they:

- Were supportive
- Gave useful feedback
- Helped candidates identify how best to meet the PQ requirements.

The findings echo the literature that discusses what supports learning: candidate motivation, support from the employing agency and a structure that underpins and fosters a culture of learning.

### **Benefits and impact of completing a PQ award**

The interviews with candidates showed ways in which they had been able to use their learning experience and identified a number of themes in relation to the benefits and rewards they had received as a result of completing their post-qualifying (PQ) study<sup>4</sup>. They also identified a list of negative features which had occurred for them while undertaking the work for their awards.

Around two thirds of candidates felt that their PQ study impacted positively on practice. The theme which was evidenced the most strongly and consistently throughout the interviews was that their PQ study had significantly improved their capacity for reflection and critical analysis. Specific mention was also repeatedly made of an increased ability and inclination to apply evidence in practice, an increase in practice knowledge and skills and an increased confidence and competence in carrying out more complex work. They also referred explicitly to appreciating being kept up to date, the benefits of reading social work literature and an increased ability to integrate theory into their thinking and practice.

When asked about opportunities to use their learning back in the workplace, candidates reported being given more opportunities to participate in the design and delivery of learning and development activities in their organisation. This involved the learning and development of others, either through contributing to training activity, work with students or their participation in service development work in their teams or work groups. They

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<sup>4</sup> Some interviewees did not complete their PQ Awards, some because they ran out of time, others because they felt the effort was not fully justified by the eventual benefits

also felt their learning was used to undertake more complex work and increased their skills in report-writing.

Around half felt that gaining a PQ award had had a recognisably positive impact on their career development. For some, this translated into feeling more able to apply for promoted posts, being given increased responsibilities and feeling more encouraged and able to undertake further study. A smaller number talked about the benefits of meeting, learning with and from colleagues from other organisations or other parts of their own organisation. This was often related to comparing and contrasting ways of working, reflecting on their own practice, building relationships with peers and developing contacts in social work education. Three quarters felt that there was a wider impact of undertaking PQ study on workplace learning culture: they felt their experience contributed to fostering a learning culture, it supported and encouraged others to undertake continuous professional development and it facilitated practice learning in the workplace.

The experiences of interviewees' employers' recognition of work towards post-qualifying education and training varied. Indeed, a lack of employer support, absence of recognition and valuing of the award were all mentioned as impacting very strongly on whether or not the full benefits of PQ study were realised in the workplace. A significant number of candidates specifically mentioned the negative impact of being given no workload relief while they were completing their awards. This was particularly acute for candidates who were required to produce regular and detailed evidence of competence.

Being given little workload relief was sometimes perceived as a lack of recognition and support, particularly when this was coupled with a lack of opportunities to use the learning in the workplace and a general ambivalence to the value of PQ study. An absence of recognition or valuing of PQ study and awards was often evidenced where interviewees reported that it had not contributed to career progression, they were not given any financial reward or were not given opportunities to use the learning in the workplace.

There were two elements of the PQ awards themselves that impacted negatively on candidates' experiences. One was related to the impending phasing out of the PQ Framework and the way in which it discouraged them from pursuing work towards the PQ awards they had started. Knowledge that the PQ framework was being phased out may also have contributed to some employers being ambivalent about the value of PQ study. However, the onerous nature of some of the requirements for the awards, particularly around the need to produce evidence of competence, was mentioned by a significant minority of candidates. This translated as feeling there was a disproportionate amount of effort put in compared to the value they got out in return. One manager, in commenting on the situation of a candidate who

chose not to complete work for PQ1 stated that the 'investment of time and energy wasn't justified'.

Managers reflected and supported many of the views expressed by candidates on benefits and impacts of undertaking a PQ award. Managers spoke of candidates having an increased ability to undertake more difficult and complex work; they also felt that candidates were 'refreshed and enthused' by their studies. In addition they felt candidates had become a resource to colleagues in the team, and made a significant contribution to learning and development in the workplace.

The other theme that came up in relation to PQ study was in relation to whether qualifying training is sufficiently specialised to support staff in practice. Some candidates who had become managers by the time they were interviewed and other managers expressed the view that further study relating theory to practice in particular fields is essential to developing confident and competent social workers. This was often talked about in terms of PQ study needing to offer an opportunity to consolidate their qualifying training in the context of practice experience and new knowledge.

PQ study offered an opportunity to:

- Reflect on practice experience gained since qualifying
- Make application of theories to practice
- Consolidate and make meaningful previous learning
- Bring new knowledge to bear on current practice in a way that enhanced their practice.

As one candidate put it

'you heard about the theories when you were training but you couldn't apply them to practice really because you had no experience, but once you have a bit of experience returning to study makes you think more about what you are doing, how you are doing it and why you are doing it, how theories can inform your practice to make it better: they make more sense'.

## Conclusions

The small size of this sample makes generalising from the findings difficult. However, some of the issues raised are worthy of consideration. The primary purpose of PQ Study is CPD, to enhance and update existing skills and knowledge and provide opportunities for reflective and analytical thinking. It is more aligned to a broad concept of CPD rather than to a narrow concept of training. If the purpose and concept of CPD is not understood and supported tangibly by employers, through giving workload relief, additional salary increments, career progression, study time, education resources it will result in a climate where candidates, colleagues and line managers are unclear about the value, to them and their employing organisations of pursuing PQ learning activity.

That said employers need to be encouraged, supported and facilitated by broader organisational frameworks (Skinner, 2005), perhaps linked to Senge's work (1990) on learning organisations or the implementation of frameworks such as the Continuous Learning Framework (SSSC and IRISS<sup>5</sup>, 2008) which argue for a whole-organisation approach. This would support what Biggs has called 'constructive alignment' of education and learning (Biggs, 2003). Biggs sees learning as conceptual change through active learning: problem-based and workplace learning that requires a harnessing of the learners' motivation in order to lead to deep, transformational learning (Biggs 2003, Biggs 2005). This means addressing learning in the real world of complex systems where no single discipline is the key to a solution for a problem. What is needed is teamwork, collaborative practice and knowledge production within the workplace or practice context. (Walsh, 2007)

If transfer of learning occurs when a social services worker applies learning from experience to a new practice situation or problem, or when new learning from a programme of study, introduction to a new theoretical approach or findings from a relevant and applicable research study are tested out or applied to working practices in the learner's working environment, then post-qualifying study, CPD and transfer of learning are areas that are closely linked to the notion of continuous improvement and evidence-informed practice (Carpenter, 2005).

This focus on transfer of learning, its theoretical basis and the potential for its evaluation leads to a more detailed consideration of key processes necessary for 'deep' learning and its transfer within the practice environment. These include: 'reflection', 'reflective practice', 'critical reflection', 'reflexivity' and 'writing reflexively'. Reflection may be defined as self-observing and reporting actions to raise awareness of underlying assumptions, reasons and feelings. Reflective practice in the context of professional learning and development becomes a process whereby a supervisor or tutor coaches students or staff members to:

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<sup>5</sup> IRISS: Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services

- Consider their practice
  - Examine their findings in the light of their stored repertoire of knowledge and experience
  - Test this extended understanding in practice
- (Gould and Taylor ed. 1996)

The findings suggest that transfer of learning occurred in the majority of PQ candidates. The majority perceived they were better able to make connections between current experience, their current practice situation and previous similar or related experiences. They were more adept at contextualising their practice within the accumulated and synthesised knowledge base and their understanding of professional role. They were better able to explore the understanding or rationale related to questions of why, what, how and by whom.

There was also some evidence to suggest that many candidates were better able to write reflexively – exploring not only what the experience was, but considering the meaning attached to it at the time and subsequently, and how this meaning may influence practice in the future. Thus reflexivity goes beyond reflection and is a process of looking inwards to consider how experiences have influenced thinking and learning – to consider and make more explicit the kinds of knowledge used in practice to make sense of and apply complex reasoning to uncertainty and complex professional judgements (Taylor and White, 2000).

The data gathered from managers supported candidates' perceptions that they were more able to apply complex reasoning and work in complex practice situations.

## **Contribution of this Study of Post-qualifying Education and Training in Scotland 2001 – 2008 to CPD for the Social Services Workforce**

The SSSC's seven objectives for CPD are:

- To improve the effectiveness, quality and relevance of learning
  - To encourage employers to utilise a range of learning and development approaches
  - To ensure workers achieve qualifications required for registration with the SSSC
  - To develop the SCQF and align CPD activities with it
  - To promote the creation of specialist awards for social service workers where necessary
  - To put in place transitional arrangements for those currently registered as candidates within the PQ Framework
  - To develop CPD activity which supports the delivery of integrated services
- (SSSC, 2004b).

The CPD operational partnership model (Brown, Keen and Rutter, 2005) emerged from this study as containing the elements most likely to support, encourage and facilitate effective post-qualifying education, training and learning in the workplace. By embedding CPD within all organisational structures, processes, policies and procedures, social workers will, as will other social service staff, be working in an environment where learning is seen as a routine activity whose main aim is to improve outcomes for service users through the ongoing development of staff.

While the SSSC's CPD Strategy (2004b) did not include a qualifications framework, the registration requirements for the social service workforce include detailed requirements for post-registration training and learning (PRTL). The Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and their Employers (2002) reinforce these. The CLF (SSSC and IRISS, 2008) spells out, in terms closely allied to emotional intelligence capabilities (Seal et al, 2006) for both individuals and organisations, developmental pathways for application to workplace learning. These two frameworks, taken together, offer a way forward that takes account of the need to bring the organisation, the learner and learning providers together in designing, planning and delivering learning opportunities and helps to address some of the barriers and facilitators experienced by respondents to this study.

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## Appendix 1

### Notes on Methodology for Phase Three

A considerable length of time elapsed between the phases of this study and the third and final phase, interviewing candidates for the post-qualifying awards, along with their managers, took place in September 2009. By this time the Post-qualifying Social Work Consortium (PQSWC) had been closed for almost a year and a half. The database with contact details of candidates was transferred to the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). This data base was used by the SSSC to ask candidates if they were willing to be interviewed for this study. Only those who agreed to be interviewed were contacted.

#### Information used for the Study

Number of Individuals on Database	975
PQ Candidates	846
Advanced Award Candidates	20
PQ Award Holders	107
Advanced Award Holders	14
Number of attempts to contact individuals	387
Number of Successful Contacts	37
Number of Interviews Completed with Candidates	35
Number of Managers Interviewed	6
Awards Achieved by Candidates interviewed	PQ1; PQ2; Practice Teaching Award; Mental Health Officer Award; Certificate in Child Protection; Certificate in Criminal Justice; Advanced Award

Thirty-five telephone interviews were conducted with candidates who had qualified as social workers between 1979 and 2006, and they were registered with the PQSWC between 1997 and 2005. Six telephone interviews were conducted with managers. The small number of interviews achieved, given the high number of candidates registered, means that caution needs to be

exercised when examining the findings from this study. Some themes do emerge from the data, and these are useful pointers to the views of candidates interviewed about the impact of their awards, but they cannot be regarded as representative of the views of the candidate group as a whole.

Consortium Area <sup>6</sup>	West		North		South-East		Tayforth	
		15		7		7		6
Programme <sup>7</sup>	PT A	CP cert	PQ1	MH O	PQS W top up	CJ cert	MS c CJ	CP Supn
	14	10	10	5	3	2	2	1

<sup>6</sup> There were four Consortia in Scotland: South East, West, Tayforth and North

<sup>7</sup> PTA: Practice Teaching Award; CP Cert: Certificate in Child Protection; PQ1: See Appendix 2; MHO: Mental Health Officer Training; PQSW top up: additional PQ Requirements met via Portfolio Route; CJ cert: Certificate in Criminal Justice Social Work; MSc CJ: MSc in Criminal Justice Social Work; CP support : Supervision and Management in Child Protection

## Appendix 2

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POST QUALIFYING AWARD IN SOCIAL WORK (PQSW)**

#### **CORE REQUIREMENTS**

**In meeting the general requirements, all candidates must:**

- a) Evaluate the effectiveness of their practice using a relevant knowledge base, including an understanding of legal and policy contexts and appropriate research;
  
- a) Demonstrate an explicit adherence to the values of social work and to the provision of ethically sound practice.

#### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**All candidates must demonstrate:**

##### **Part I**

**PQ1** that they have improved and extended the level of competence acquired by the point of qualification;

##### **Part II**

**PQ2** competence in working effectively in complex situations;

**PQ3** competence in exercising the powers and responsibilities of a professional social worker, including the appropriate use of discretion and the management of risk;

**PQ4** ability to make informed decisions;

**PQ5** competence in identifying and maintaining purposeful networks and collaborative arrangements

**PQ6** competence in enabling others through management, supervision, consultation, practice teaching or direct contributions to education and training.

## Appendix 2

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ADVANCED AWARD IN SOCIAL WORK (AASW)**

#### **CORE REQUIREMENTS**

**In meeting the general requirements, all candidates must:**

- a) demonstrate analysis and critical reflection which informs and influences practice, policy and service provision;
  
- a) provide evidence of a commitment to sustaining the values of social work in the light of continuing social and political change and be able to define and develop policies and practices accordingly.

#### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**All candidates must:**

**AA1** provide evidence of significant contribution to the development, delivery and evaluation of the service provided in a chosen area by demonstrating the ability to research, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate strategies for improvement or change;

**AA2** demonstrate critical appraisal of relevant theoretical models, policies and law, in their chosen area, including knowledge of local, national and UK perspectives;

**AA3** demonstrate skilled use of a wide repertoire of methods and be able to select and use the most effective approach to meeting consumer need for the different aspects of their work;

**AA4** demonstrate competence in enhancing the capabilities of others as a means of informing and improving practice or service delivery;

**AA5** demonstrate highly developed skills in strategic networking, negotiation and collaboration;

## Appendix 2

- AA6** demonstrate competence in responding to and managing change in their chosen area, including the ability to respond to unintended outcomes;
  
- AA7** demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the impact of relevant policy, practice and institutions within the European or international context in order to inform practice or service development;
  
- AA8** provide evidence of leadership in their chosen field, including the ability to work independently, and to be accountable, in fulfilling the responsibilities of their role.