

# **Handbook for Quality Assurance and Enhancement**



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## **Section 1**

### **Introduction**

The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 provides that the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is responsible for the promotion of high standards of conduct and practice among social service workers and that high standards in their education and training are maintained.

In order to carry out the responsibilities outlined above, the SSSC has introduced Rules and Requirements (Rules) which govern all approved courses. There are three sets of Rules, each of which applies to a different kind of course:

1. Rules for Social Work Training 2003
2. Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005
3. Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008.

This handbook outlines the procedures officers of the SSSC, course providers, and other stakeholders should follow to meet the Rules, and forms the SSSC's quality assurance and enhancement responsibilities. In this context quality enhancement refers to the continuous process of improvement that demonstrates a responsive and reflective approach to course development. Please remember that the guidance in this handbook cannot act as a substitute for the Rules themselves. We recommend you refer to the appropriate set of Rules depending on the type of course being provided, or proposed, when using this document.

The flowchart at the end of the introduction section shows the different sections of the handbook. A flowchart is also included at the end of each section to provide an overview of the steps taken in carrying out that procedure.

### **Principles underpinning the quality assurance and enhancement responsibilities:**

- avoid duplication
- take account of existing internal and external quality arrangements
- are evidence based
- based on principles of equal opportunity
- allow the SSSC to be assured that the provision is of sufficient quality
- promote continuous improvement in line with expectations of quality enhancement
- actively involve employers, students, people who use services and carers in the process of course delivery and quality enhancement
- are consistent with the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers (2016).

## **Definitions of key words and phrases which appear in this handbook**

The following words and phrases are referred to in this handbook and are drawn from the Rules. It is important to note that some of the definitions do not apply to all three sets of Rules:

'Approvals panel' means the group of panel members from SSSC's Learning and Development Team, people who use social services and their carers, staff from higher or further education or other learning provider and social service employers.

'Awarding body' refers to higher education institutions with degree conferring powers or other awarding bodies such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

'Carer' means a person who provides informal, unpaid care to a member of their family or to another person.

'Chief Executive' means the chief executive of the SSSC.

'The Council' (our Council Members) oversee the work of the SSSC. The SSSC is the regulator for the social service workforce in Scotland. We protect the public by registering social service workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development.

'Council Member' means a person who sits on the SSSC Council.

'SSSC Registration Team' means the department of the SSSC who manage the registration of the social service workforce and maintains the Register.

'Course correspondent' means the person who the course provider has identified will be the point of contact with the SSSC. This may sometimes, but not necessarily, be the course provider - head of social work or training or the course provider - course or module leader.

'Course provider' means a higher or further education institution, or other learning centre that is approved by an awarding body, that provides or proposes to provide a course that is designed to meet the criteria for approval set out in the Rules for Social Work Training 2003, Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, or Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standards for Childhood Practice 2008 as revised in 2015, or on whose behalf a course is provided in terms of a franchising agreement.

'Course provider - head of social work or training' means the person who the course provider has identified as having overall responsibility for course provision. The course provider - course or module leader means the person who the course provider has identified as having delegated responsibility from the course provider - head of social work or training for managing a particular course or module of a course.

'Course provider - quality assurance officer' means a person who the course provider has identified as the person in their agency with specific responsibility for quality assurance.

'Course provider - course teaching staff' means people identified by the course provider as providing a teaching or training input to the approved course.

'Course standards' means the standards upon which a particular course is built eg Standards in Social Work Education (SiSWE), Standards for Childhood Practice.

'External examiner or external verifier' means a person who is independent and impartial and who is contracted by an awarding body or course provider to provide informed comment on the standards set for approved courses and student achievement in relation to these standards. They present their feedback annually to the awarding body or course provider in a report by the external examiner or external verifier and may include recommended action.

'Further education (FE) college' means a college providing further education and training and normally involved in the delivery of national and higher national qualifications awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

'Director of Development and Innovation' is the Officer of the SSSC who has senior management responsibility for learning and development activity, which includes the regulation of education and training.

'Higher education institution (HEI)' means an institution with degree awarding powers.

'Learning and Development Adviser' is the member of staff of the SSSC who may participate in carrying out the quality assurance and enhancement procedures outlined in this handbook and who may also be the link person to, and liaison with, a specific course provider.

'Officer of the SSSC' means the SSSC's Director of Development and Innovation' or any other officer appointed for the purpose by the SSSC's Chief Executive eg Learning and Development Adviser

'People who use services' are individuals, groups, communities or organisations that receive social work services. This includes the children and the parents of children who use an early years' service.

'The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education' means the UK wide body whose mission is to safeguard the public interest in sound standards of higher education qualifications and to encourage continuous improvement in the management of the quality of higher education.

'Head of Learning and Development' is the person employed by the SSSC who manages the Learning and Development Advisers in the SSSC's Learning and Development Team. The Head of Learning and Development reports to the SSSC's Director of Development and Innovation.

'Relevant national quality assurance body' refers to national bodies which have authority over the assurance and enhancement processes applied by providers of education.

'The Scottish Funding Council (SFC)', (formerly the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council and Scottish Further Education Funding Council) means the body that distributes funding for teaching and learning, research and other activities in Scotland's colleges and universities.

'The Scottish Government' is the devolved government of Scotland.

'The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)' means the executive non departmental public body sponsored by the Scottish Government and responsible for the

development, accreditation, assessment and award of qualifications other than degrees in Scotland.

'Social service provider agencies' means organisations in the statutory, voluntary and private sector that are providers of social services. These may include agencies whose primary function is in relation to health, education and housing and which provide social services.

'Social worker' means a person who has a professional qualification in social work (as defined in the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001).

'Social service worker' means those who are currently eligible for registration in terms of Section 46 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

'Stakeholders' means any individual or individuals who may have an interest in the business of the SSSC or the course provision. This may include people who use services, carers and students, representatives of provider agencies and further and higher education institutions, the Scottish Government and the QAA.

'Student' means anyone undertaking a course provided by an approved course provider.

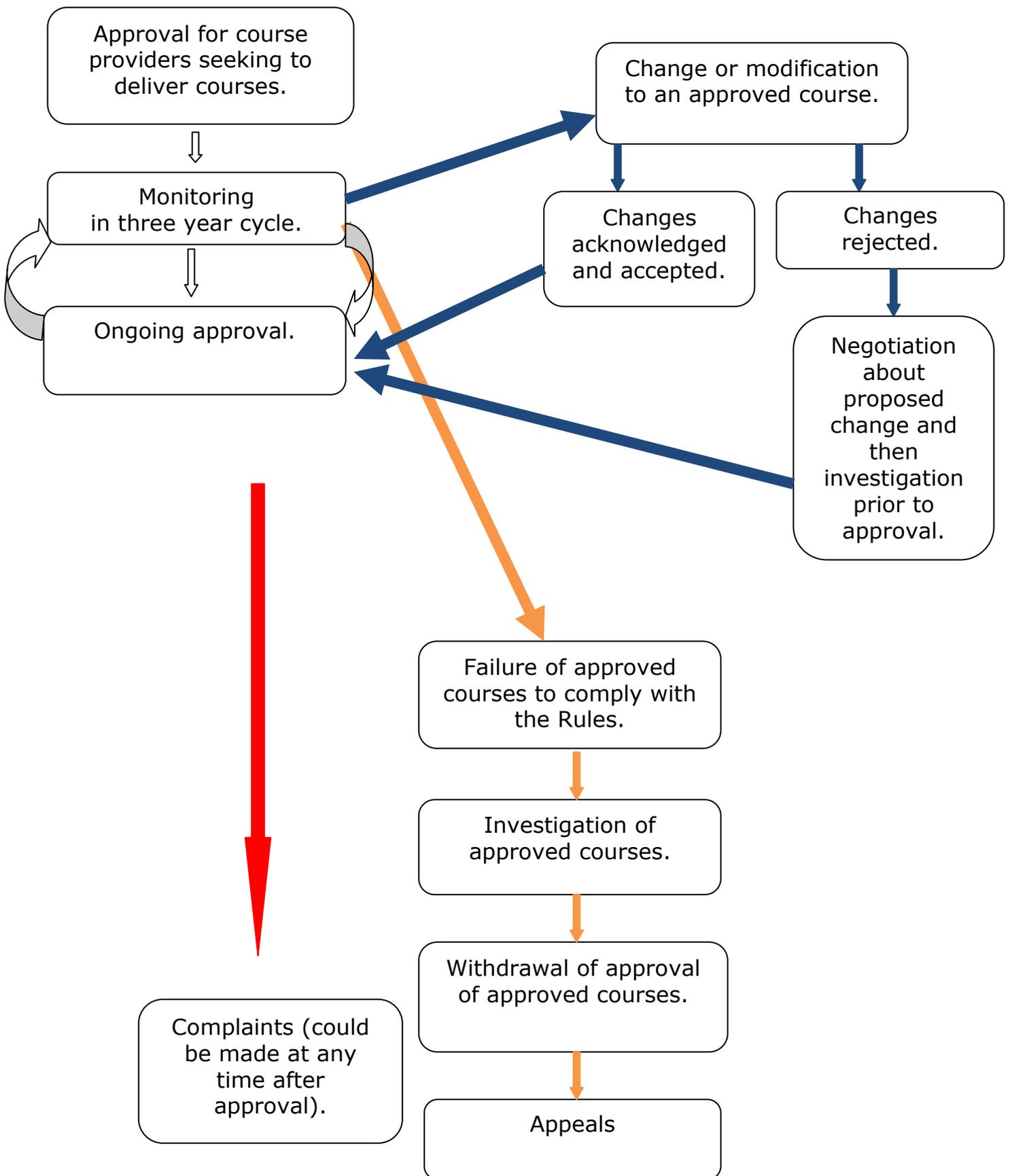
'Student representative' means a person nominated by students undertaking a course provided by an approved course provider to represent them for a specific purpose. The student representative may, but will not necessarily be, formally elected to represent students.

'SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers' (2016) are the standards of conduct and practice which all social service workers and their employers must follow

'SSSC Registrar' means the member of staff who has overall responsibility for managing the registration functions of the SSSC.

**If you would like to request this document in another format or language, please contact the SSSC on 0345 60 30 891.**

## Overview of SSSC Handbook for Quality Assurance and Enhancement



## **Section 2**

### **Approval of courses**

#### **Introduction**

This procedure has been developed to assist course providers in the planning and design of course provision and to help guide them through the SSSC's approval process. The approval process may vary slightly depending on the type of course being proposed and the set of Rules to be followed. The SSSC is looking to develop a system with providers for joint approval.

The system in place is designed to ensure that:

- applicant course providers are appropriately advised and assisted
- the support and development process enables positive outcomes
- individual approvals panel members are assisted and supported to engage knowledgeably and constructively with the processes and tasks
- applicant course providers can have confidence in the application process and in all parties involved in this.

#### **Approvals Team**

Approvals are the responsibility of a group of SSSC Learning and Development Advisers. It is the responsibility of these workers to assist course providers to prepare for and carry out course approval.

The SSSC will identify a Learning and Development Adviser to work in the development of the approval with individual course providers, which will enhance the spirit of collaboration.

A different Learning and Development Adviser will chair the approvals panel.

#### **Approvals panel**

In order to ensure fair processing of the application for approval, the SSSC will arrange for a panel of stakeholders to review and comment on the application documents, this is called the approvals panel. The SSSC regularly advertises for new panel members and holds training and orientation sessions for interested parties. Panel members are then selected from the pool of people who wish to become members on the basis of the representation required and individuals' areas of knowledge and experience.

The SSSC aims to recruit a large enough pool of panel members to make sure the workload can be spread over a reasonable number of people; that each category of representation is reasonably covered; and to have a spread of members across the country to allow for geographical and travel factors.

The membership of each panel consists of stakeholder representatives as follows:

- a Learning and Development Adviser (one person, who is the chair of the panel)
- someone who uses services and/or a carer (one person)
- a member of staff from a higher education or further education institution or other learning provider (one person)
- a social service provider agency in the statutory or voluntary sector (one person).

Panel members receive training and support to undertake the role. The SSSC aims to increase the number of trained panel members with emphasis on widening access for people who use services and carers.

The chair of the approvals panel is responsible for recording the SSSC decision and giving feedback to the applicant course provider.

All approval panel members will treat the approvals process as confidential.

### **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for approval.**

The following people may be involved in, or affected by, this process:

- approvals panel
- carers
- course correspondent
- course provider
- higher education institution
- further education institution
- other learning provider
- officers of the SSSC
- people who use services
- social service provider agencies
- social workers
- social service workers
- SQA

### **References**

The following is a list of SSSC external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically part II
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically part II
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, specifically part II and as revised in 2015
- SSSC procedure for monitoring
- SSSC procedure for appeals
- SSSC procedure for complaints
- Record of the SSSC decision and feedback to the applicant course provider.

## **Forms**

The following is a list of standard forms which are available with the handbook and which must be completed as part of carrying out this procedure:

- form of agreement
- approvals proforma

## **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out. These may be completed forms (as listed above) and/or any other relevant written documents produced as a result of carrying out the procedure:

- written notification of intent
- completed form of agreement
- completed approvals form
- additional documents provided in support of the application for approval
- written approval recommendation
- written confirmation of decision and feedback to the applicant course provider

## **Procedure for approval**

### **The initial enquiry and planning for approval**

Course providers seeking to deliver a course must approach the SSSC to request approval.

This initial informal or formal enquiry will lead to an initial visit and preliminary discussion between the course provider and a Learning and Development Adviser. The SSSC aims to work closely with course providers to plan for each individual course approval and to agree the best way forward in each case. Preliminary discussions between the SSSC and course providers will therefore begin as early as possible.

### **Planning, support and development for course providers**

The ethos of the SSSC's approvals process is to encourage a collaborative and developmental approach which allows course providers to prepare submissions for approval with guidance and feedback at key stages. It is also important that the approval process is impartial and that approval panel members have no direct prior involvement with the course provider in the development of the course provision that is being approved.

### **Notification of intent**

Once it has been agreed that SSSC approval is required, course providers must send a written notification of intent to the SSSC. This must set out the course provider's plans for developing the course. The written notification of intent must contain the name and business address of the person that the course provider has identified as the course correspondent. It is with this person that the SSSC will communicate with regarding formal approval of the course.

### **Written application for approval**

On receipt of the notification of intent, the SSSC will agree and notify the course provider of the date for submission of the written application for approval of the course. The approvals panel will normally consider the application six weeks after the submission date and will notify the course provider of this date.

The dates of approvals panel meetings are set in advance and scheduled throughout the year. These dates are available to course providers.

The submission must include the completed and signed form of agreement, the completed approvals form and any additional documents used to support the application for approval ( eg documents used for any course provider internal validation purposes, if relevant).

Where there are course provider validation events and/or activity taking place, the course provider must cross reference their own internal documents with the SSSC's in order to demonstrate where information can be found easily and to show how each of the SSSC's criteria for approval have been met.

Four hard copies and an electronic copy of the application documents must be submitted to the SSSC marked 'For the attention of the Learning and Development Team and posted to the following address:

Scottish Social Services Council  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

The SSSC will check that the paperwork is in order and will formally log receipt of the application. Course providers must strive to make sure that all documents submitted are as complete as possible. Incomplete submissions for approval may affect approval timescales.

Copies of the application will be distributed to the members of the particular approval panel that has been convened to deal with the approval of the course.

### **Support and development sessions for approval panel members**

Some approval panel members may require additional support to review the approvals documents in advance of the formal approval event. Support and development sessions for individual approval panel members will be arranged and undertaken as required by the SSSC in advance of the event.

### **The approvals process**

When the written application is received, the approvals process will, in agreement with the course provider, be progressed by either:

- (a) the course provider and the approvals panel meeting formally
- (b) the approvals panel and the course provider communicating through correspondence.

The course provider will advise the SSSC of their preference. The SSSC would prefer to have a meeting.

Where course providers have validation events planned, the SSSC may request a joint event. Any materials developed and used for internal validation purposes can also be used for the SSSC approval purposes.

The approvals panel will then meet to discuss the application for approval.

Where the course provider is still in the process of developing particular aspects of the course, the approvals panel will take this into account.

Approval is based on the evidence presented. There is an expectation that the relevant Rules will be met in full at the point of approval, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The SSSC recognises that at the point of approval the course may not yet be operational and therefore the application may largely be based on planned inputs and processes. The emphasis at the point of approval will therefore be on the criteria for approval and:

- (1) the commitment of the course provider to meet these
- (2) agreements between the course provider and key stakeholders to meet these
- (3) policies, systems, procedures and protocols in place that reflect these
- (4) action plans to make sure that the criteria for approval will be met.

The SSSC will look to establish that the work undertaken by the time of the approval event is **as good as it can be**. It will also be looking for a set of undertakings by the course provider, with clear plans to complete any particular work that is still outstanding.

After full consideration of the application, the approvals panel will provide feedback to the course provider. The panel will make a written recommendation to the SSSC's Director of Development and Innovation, who will make the decision about approval. The Director of Development and Innovation will inform the course provider in writing of the decision. Prior to this, the panel may give informal feedback to the course provider.

### **Possible outcomes following the approvals event**

There are several possible outcomes following an application for approval, depending on the course and set of Rules used:

- the course is approved
- in some circumstances the SSSC will approve a course but will want to agree an action plan with the course provider. The approvals panel will advise the course provider of any additional information or work that is required and agree timescales. The action plan will be followed up by the SSSC as part of its longer term quality assurance and enhancement work and the SSSC will provide support and advice to the course provider. The SSSC requires that some things are firmly in place before candidates can commence their training.
- under some Rules<sup>1</sup> a course may be approved with conditions which when met will result in full approval. The SSSC will provide an action plan and timescales.
- the course is not approved. In this case, the course provider would have to reapply taking into account the feedback from the SSSC.

The SSSC's approach to approval is that it is undertaken in collaboration and partnership. Concerns about any aspect of the approval process will be discussed openly and resolved at a local level.

If a course provider is unhappy with the approval process or the outcome of the approval, the SSSC has comprehensive procedures for appeals and complaints in terms of the relevant Rules. These can be found in sections 9 and 10 of the handbook.

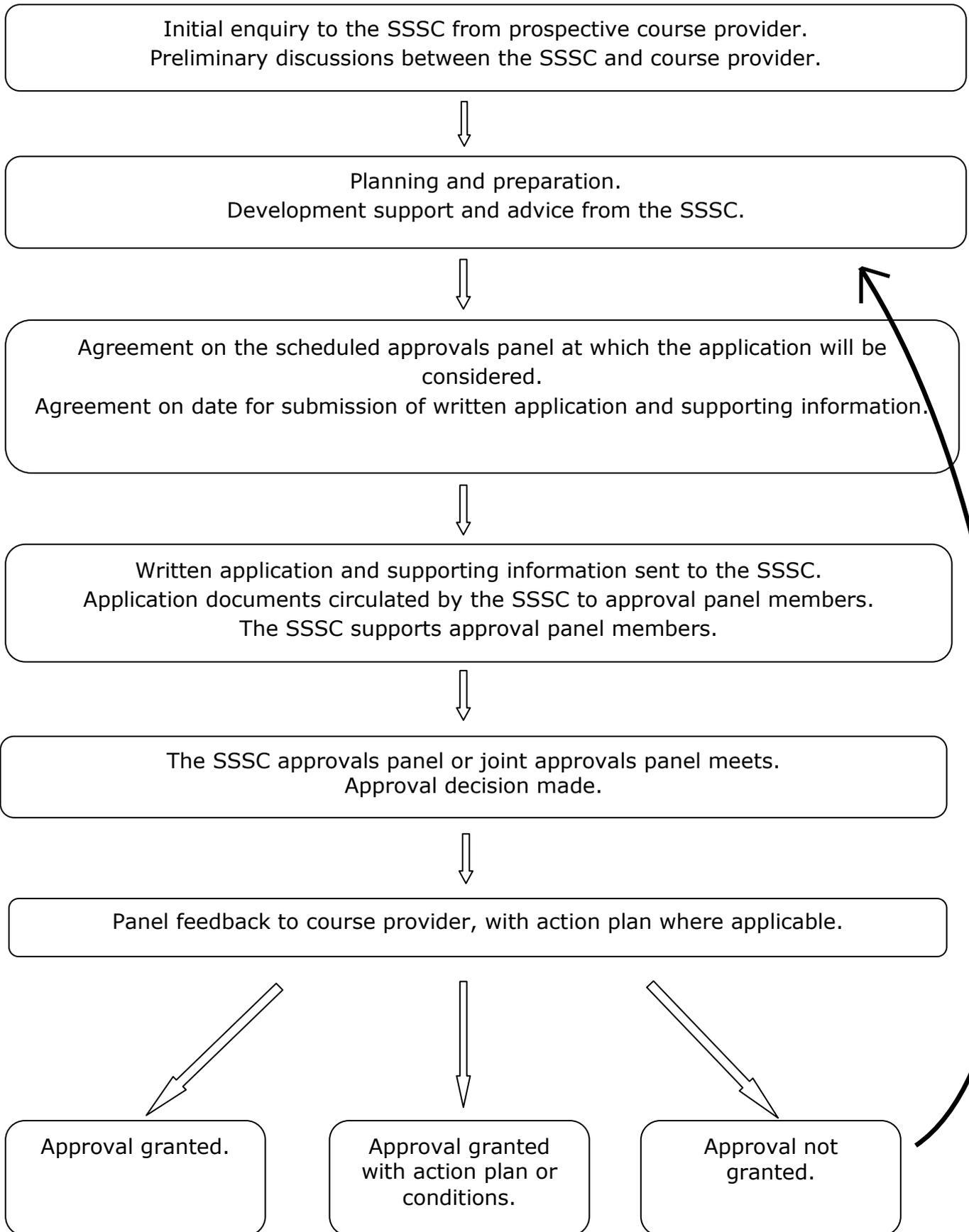
Approval will be ongoing and will remain in place while the course provider meets the appropriate Rules and Requirements. Course monitoring will determine if the Rules and Requirements continue to be met. The course provider must not make any material change to the course provision without consulting with and obtaining the SSSC's consent in writing, as per the procedure for making a change or modification to an approved course.

The SSSC will publish a list of approved courses in a range of formats.

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<sup>1</sup> Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, Rule 7.6  
September 2018

## Procedure for approval flowchart



## **Section 3**

### **Making a change or modification to an approved course**

#### **Introduction**

It is recognised by the SSSC that change or modification to an approved course is likely to be evidence of continuous improvement and quality enhancement. However, the course provider must not make any material change to the course provision without obtaining the SSSC's consent in writing. The SSSC reserves the right to determine what changes are minor or material.

The SSSC must be notified of any changes made to an approved course using the material change form. For the majority of changes the SSSC will note these and discuss them in terms of, for example, rationale, potential impact on course delivery, learning outcomes and student experience with the course provider.

#### **Definition of minor and material changes or modifications**

Minor changes would include the rewriting of modules within the existing course and assessment framework, minor amendments to the assessment criteria, restructuring of the course in terms of delivery while maintaining the credit and levelling values.

A material change or modification to a course could include the following:

- the provision of new modules within the existing course and assessment framework
- where a change or changes to a course are the direct result of a rise or fall in student numbers and/or staff resources as related to the resource level at the time of the original approval of the course
- where a change or changes to a course are the result of alterations in partnership arrangements with external stakeholders which have impacted on course resources such as adequate supply of practice learning opportunities
- where a new mode of delivery is introduced such as distance learning or part time
- where internal course provider processes or changes in course and module design and delivery are imposed which introduce major amendments to the approved course
- where material restructuring of the approved course takes place in preparation for renewal of approval of that course
- where the change is based on sound pedagogical principles and will enhance the student experience.

## **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for making a change or modification to an approved course**

The following people may be involved in, or affected by, this process:

- course provider - head of social work or training
- course provider - course/module leader
- course provider - quality assurance officers as appropriate
- officers of the SSSC
- other stakeholders

## **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically part II, Rule 7.7
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically part II, Rule 9
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015 specifically part II, Rule 7.7
- Relevant course standards eg Standards in Social Work Education (SiSWE).

## **Forms**

Material change form

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out.

- Written notification of change and/or modification to an approved course (material change form).
- Written notification of approval of change and/or modification to the approved course provider from the SSSC.

## **Procedure for making a change or modification to an approved course**

### **Notification of change or modification**

Where any change or modification to an approved course is planned or anticipated by a course provider, that provider should notify the SSSC in writing supported by the material change form which must include rationale, implications and anticipated benefits.

### **Minor change or modification**

A Learning and Development Adviser will acknowledge this notification and, if the change and/or modification is minor, will record the changes and/or modifications and confirm this in writing to the course provider.

### **Material change or modification**

Where the change or modification is considered material, the Learning and Development Adviser will seek a discussion with the course provider to examine the rationale, extent and implications of the proposed change and to clarify the process of approval or re-approval for any such change.

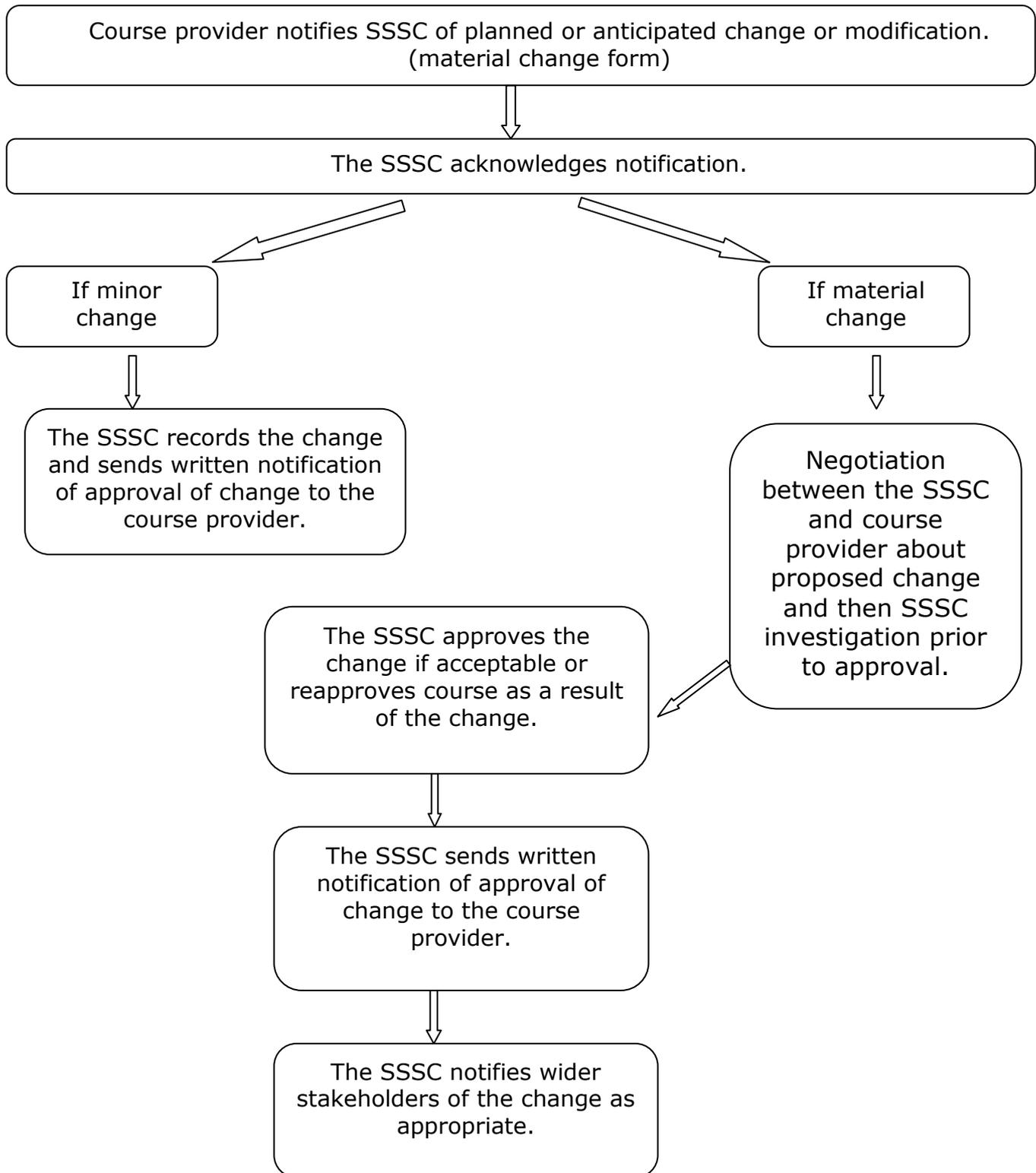
The relevant course standards will be referred to in order to make sure that the course will continue to meet these following the proposed change.

### **Confirming the change or modification**

Once the approval is confirmed, the Learning and Development Adviser will confirm the change or modification in writing to the course provider and will notify wider stakeholders as appropriate.

Material change will also be notified to the SSSC through annual monitoring.

## Procedure for making a change or modification to an approved course flowchart



## **Section 4**

### **Monitoring**

#### **Introduction**

The monitoring procedure for courses approved by the SSSC is part of the SSSC's regulatory function related to the quality assurance and enhancement of courses. It also provides the SSSC with important information for workforce planning and other developmental processes. In particular, the SSSC uses the information it gathers to identify trends, common issues and examples of successful innovation.

Quality assurance and monitoring of social work degrees, specialist training and the childhood practice awards follow the same procedure.

Courses are monitored on a three year cycle. In year one and two providers will make a self-declaration that they continue to meet the Rules and are compliant with the terms of approval. Any material changes will be reported within the material change form. External examiner and/or verifier reports and institutional responses to these will be submitted and data will also be reported annually. If material changes are noted these will be considered by the link adviser who will determine whether they remain compliant with the terms of approval.

For the third year there will be more significant monitoring. Course providers will complete a self-evaluation and provide a range of relevant documents to evidence the claims being made within the self-evaluation. This follows with a visit to the course by the SSSC adviser who will be accompanied by a senior employer representative. The visit will require representation from the university and/or training provider, employers, students, and people who use services and carers.

#### **Year three significant monitoring**

The SSSC will require the following as evidence for year three significant monitoring.

A short, self-evaluation form completed with the following information:

- course compliance and validation
- course development and management
- course content, structure, teaching and assessment
- quality assurance and enhancement
- stakeholder involvement
- progress with enhancement themes/areas for development.

The supplementary documents to support the self-evaluation information are generally in the internal course provider quality assurance and enhancement reports. This will normally include annual course monitoring reports and internal quality assurance reports for the three year period, external examiner reports, practice learning reports, course handbooks and any other relevant supporting documents.

Course providers will submit the data information for the reporting year as in the self-declaration years.

## **Year three monitoring visits**

In year three the SSSC link adviser will visit the course provider accompanied by a senior employer representative. The employer representative will have access to quality assurance documents. The visit will include meeting(s) with stakeholders and people who use services group as appropriate.

Within eight weeks the course provider will receive a brief feedback report which will indicate if the Rules continue to be met and highlight issues of good practice and issues for development.

## **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for monitoring**

The following people may be involved in, or affected by, this process:

- course provider - head of social work or training
- course provider - course/module leaders/tutors/staff group
- external examiner or verifier(s)
- officers of the SSSC
- other stakeholders, such as employers, students, people who use services and carers, as appropriate.

## **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it.

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically rule 9
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically rule 11
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015, specifically rule 9
- quality assurance monitoring spreadsheet guidance notes
- SSSC procedure for managing failure to comply with the Rules
- SSSC procedure for investigation
- SSSC procedure for closing a course
- course provider internal quality assurance reports
- external examiner or verifier reports
- Quality assurance documents related to practice learning
- quality assurance calendar
- SSSC regulation and practice learning management information system.

## **Forms**

The following is a list of standard forms which are available with the handbook and which must be completed as part of carrying out this procedure.

Year one and two

- Quality assurance monitoring (QAM), including checklist and general information and progression spreadsheets
- Self-declaration form
- Material change form

Year three

- QAM, including checklist and general information and progression spreadsheets
- Self-evaluation form
- Supplementary documents (as referred to within the checklist)
- Material change form if required.

## **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out. These may be completed forms (as listed previously) and/or any other relevant written documents produced as a result of carrying out the procedure:

### **Year one, two and three**

Written request for QAM to be completed.

### **Year one and two**

- Completed QAM checklist, self-declaration form and material change form, if appropriate, general information and progression spreadsheets, and any other internal quality assurance documents provided by the training provider such as external examiner or verifier reports
- Written acknowledgement of completed QAM
- Letter of response to QAM confirming that the Rules continue to be met.

### **Year three**

- Completed QAM checklist, self-evaluation form, general information and progression spreadsheets
- Supplementary documents providing evidence to support the claims within the self-evaluation form, including external examiner or verifier reports.

## **Procedure for monitoring**

### **Completing the necessary documents**

Each course provider will have an SSSC Learning and Development Adviser assigned to them who will undertake a monitoring and development role in line with the SSSC's quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

The SSSC will write to the course provider, head of social work or training, as per the quality assurance calendar, requesting that the QAM be completed. A deadline for receipt of the completed QAM will be included in this request. It is essential that course providers adhere to this deadline. Failure to do so may impact on the continuation of approval of the course.

The course provider, head of social work or training will make sure that the QAM for their approved course is completed and returned to the SSSC by the stated deadline, along with any supplementary documents. One signed hard copy of the QAM, and one hard copy of the additional documents must be provided by the due date, in addition to an electronic copy of the QAM.

In addition to the information about the course, a course provider authorised signatory must sign each completed QAM, self-declaration form, material change form, if appropriate, or self-evaluation form to confirm that the information provided is accurate and that the course continues to meet the SSSC's criteria for approval. The course provider must confirm contact details for the staff members with whom the SSSC will liaise during the year.

If the course provider has any queries about the QAM they should contact the Learning and Development Adviser aligned to them.

The SSSC will acknowledge receipt of the completed QAM in writing within two weeks of receiving it.

### **Reviewing the documents and providing feedback**

The Learning and Development Adviser assigned to the course provider will be responsible for reading the quality assurance report, confirming that it is satisfactory and that the course continues to meet the Rules within eight weeks. If a material change form is submitted the adviser will contact the course leader and discuss the changes. If the changes are accepted within the terms of the approval the approval will be continued and the adviser will confirm continuation of approval. If the changes constitute a major change to the conditions of approval the adviser will discuss the changes with the Head of Learning and Development for a decision on action to be taken. The adviser will, through their ongoing relationship with the course provider, follow up all relevant quality and enhancement matters arising from the QAM and negotiate any changes or actions that can be taken to ensure that the course remains compliant with the terms of approval.

### **Management of information and reporting**

Workforce intelligence advisers will collate the quantitative data received and this information will be used for quality assurance purposes and for informing the annual Quality Assurance Report which is submitted to Council. Following the significant monitoring visit feedback will be sent to the course provider. The information will be collated along with the information from other course providers and will be used for quality assurance purposes and for informing the Quality Assurance Report which is submitted to the Council. This will include reference to the work, achievements and progress with enhancement themes of course providers, students and wider stakeholders in achieving the aims of the approved course and meeting its standards and requirements.

## Monitoring flowchart year one and two

The SSSC writes to course provider requesting that QAM be completed.



Course provider raises any queries with the SSSC.



Course provider completes and signs QAM within required deadline and sends it, along with self declaration form and, if required, material change form and any supplementary documentation, to the SSSC.



The SSSC acknowledges receipt of the completed QAM within two weeks of receiving it.



The SSSC reviews QAM and supplementary documentation.  
If any concerns with content, the SSSC discusses internally and agrees action required.



The SSSC provides a letter to course provider within eight weeks of receiving documentation confirming approval is continuing.



The SSSC follows up relevant quality assurance and enhancement matters from QAM with course provider as necessary.

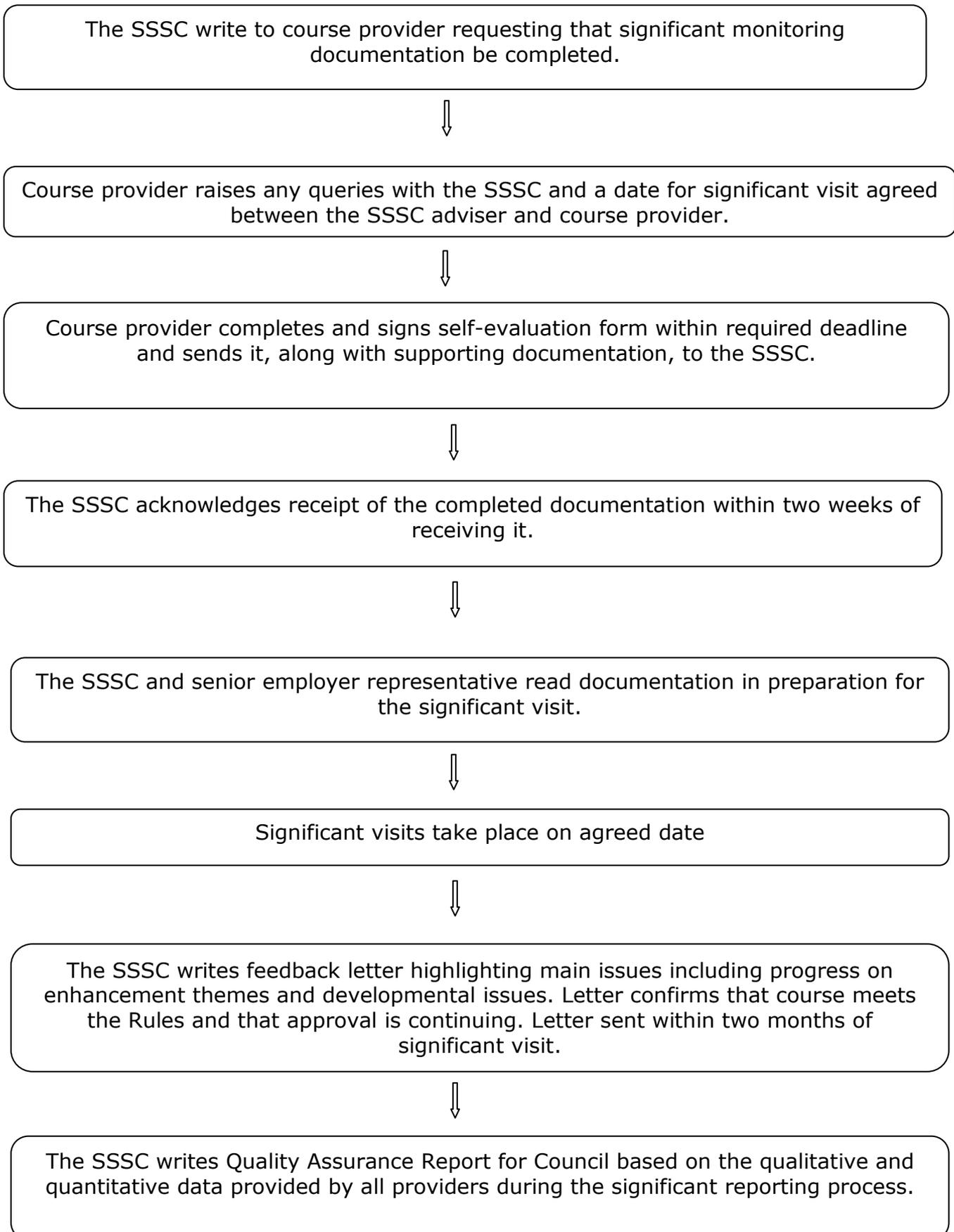


The SSSC inputs QAM quantitative data to the management information system and produces reports from management information system.



The SSSC writes annual quality assurance report for the Council based on quantitative and qualitative data from the QAM.

### Monitoring flowchart year three



## Section 5

### Renewal of approval of courses and reviews

#### Introduction

Approval of courses is continuous while monitoring provides sufficient evidence that the Rules continue to be met.

Courses validated through HEIs will be subject also to QAA guidance about subject reviews. If invited SSSC advisers will attend and contribute to such reviews.

The SSSC must receive reports from the HEI about the outcome of the internal subject review as soon as reasonably possible. Outcomes of action points will also be required within the action plan timescale.

#### Significant connection

Where the SSSC invites an employer representative to participate in significant monitoring they must not have significant connection with the course provider being visited. In this instance **significant connection** is defined as having been involved in any aspect of the course provider's course provision in the previous four years. This may include:

- current or recently retired external examiners or verifiers
- honorary professors
- visiting lecturers/trainers
- employees of the course provider
- employers represented on provider boards.

#### References

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically rule 13.2
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically rule 15.2
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015 specifically rule 13
- SSSC regulation and practice learning management information system
- course provider internal subject review findings
- course provider internal quality assurance processes eg external examiner reports
- Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education
- Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- self-evaluation document
- SSSC procedure for managing failure to comply with the Rules
- SSSC procedure for investigation
- SSSC procedure for managing the withdrawal of approval
- SSSC procedure for appeals.

## **Section 6**

### **Failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules**

#### **Introduction**

Where the course provider fails to comply with one or more of the Rules at any stage during the year the SSSC will attempt to make sure compliance through negotiation.

People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for managing the failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules.

The following people may be involved, or affected by, this process:

- course provider - head of social work or training
- course provider – course or module leaders
- other learning provider
- officers of the SSSC.

#### **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically rule 14
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically rule 16
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015 specifically rule 14
- SSSC procedure for investigation of approved courses.

#### **Forms**

There are no standard forms to complete as part of carrying out this procedure.

#### **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out:

- written notification of possible failure to comply with one or more of the Rules
- preliminary report
- written confirmation of action taken by course provider to remedy a breach of the Rules.

## **Procedure for managing the failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules**

Where an issue comes to the attention of the SSSC, a Learning and Development Adviser or other officer of the SSSC will notify the course provider - head of social work or training in writing that the SSSC is in possession of information that suggests a possible failure to comply with one or more of the Rules.

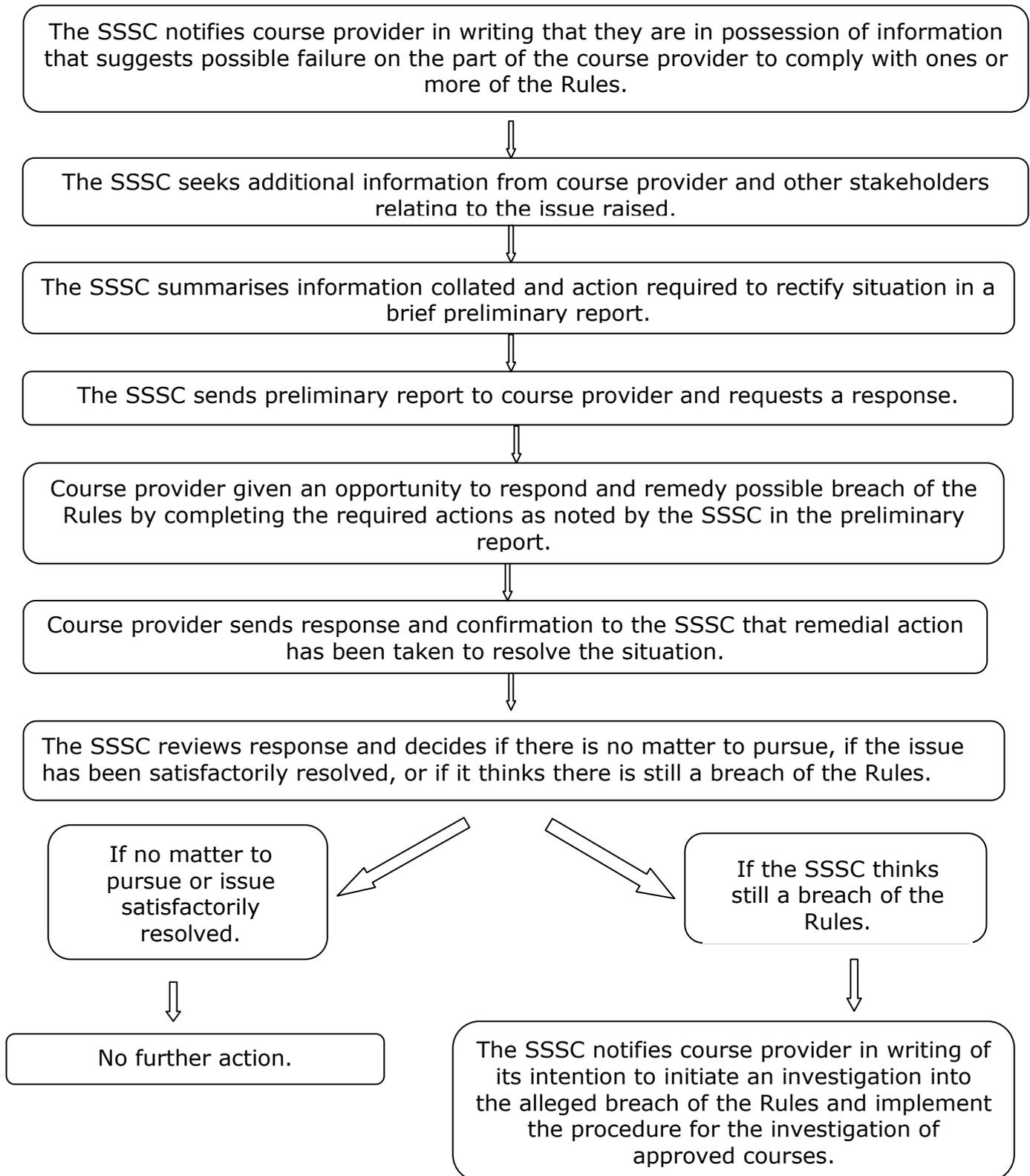
The Learning and Development Adviser will seek to obtain additional information from the course provider and any other relevant parties. The Learning and Development Adviser will then summarise the information available in a brief preliminary report, which will also outline what action needs to be taken to make sure that the Rules are met. The preliminary report will be sent to the course provider - head of social work or training, and they will be asked to respond.

If there is indeed a breach of the Rules, the course provider will be given an opportunity to remedy this. Confirmation of remedial action taken must be sent to the Learning and Development Adviser in writing by the course provider – head of social work or training. The SSSC will then make a decision as to whether it believes that there is no matter to pursue or that the matter has been satisfactorily resolved. If this is the case, no further action will be taken.

Where the SSSC remains of the view that there may be a failure on the part of the course provider to comply with one or more of the Rules, it will advise the course provider, in writing, of its intention to initiate an investigation using the SSSC procedure for investigation of approved courses. This notification will specify the grounds for taking this course of action.

Where the SSSC considers it appropriate due to the seriousness of the alleged failure the course provider will be informed in writing of the SSSC's intention to initiate an investigation immediately. The definition of the seriousness of the matter is at the sole discretion of the officers of the SSSC.

## Procedure for managing the failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules flowchart



## Section 7

### Investigation of approved courses

#### Introduction

This procedure will be implemented where:

- the SSSC is of a view that there may be a failure on the part of a course provider to comply with one or more of the Rules and where an opportunity for the course provider to remedy this has not in the view of the SSSC been successful
- where the SSSC considers the alleged failure to be serious enough to warrant an immediate investigation.

The purpose of an investigation will be to find out whether or not a course provider has breached one or more of the Rules and this may occur at any time.

#### People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for investigating approved courses

The following people may be involved, or affected by, this process:

- course provider - head of social work or training
- course provider – course or module leaders
- other learning provider
- officers of the SSSC
- Council Members.

#### Significant connection

Where the SSSC appoints Council Members or other individuals to participate in the investigation of approved courses they can do so as long as they do not have, or have not had, any significant connection with the course provider. In this instance **significant connection** is defined as having been involved in any aspect of the course provider's course provision in the previous four years. This may include:

- current or recently retired external examiners or verifiers
- honorary professors
- visiting lecturers/teachers/trainers
- employees of the course provider
- employers represented on provider boards

## References

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically rule 15
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically rule 17
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015, specifically rule 15
- SSSC procedure for managing the failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules
- SSSC procedure for managing the withdrawal of approval
- Data Protection Act 1998
- SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers.

## Forms

There are no standard forms to complete as part of carrying out this procedure.

## Records

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out:

- written notification of intention to initiate an investigation
- list of issues to be investigated and people to be interviewed as part of the investigation
- meetings schedule
- meeting minutes
- written confirmation of decision following an investigation, including details of remedial action if relevant
- written confirmation of decision following completion of remedial action.

## **Procedure for investigating approved courses**

The investigation will take place no later than 28 days from the course provider receiving the written notice. Written notice will have been provided as part of the SSSC procedure for managing the failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules.

An officer of the SSSC will:

- gather information on the alleged breach of the Rules
- prepare a list of issues to be considered
- prepare a list of people to be interviewed
- agree the questions to be asked of individuals
- prepare a list of additional documents required
- arrange a schedule of meetings.

Visits to the course provider will be undertaken by a Learning and Development Adviser, a senior officer of the SSSC and/or Council Members or other individuals who do not have, or have not had, any significant connection with the course provider. These meetings will deal with questions and any additional documents requested, subject to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. Minutes will be taken at these meetings.

If the decision is that no breach of the Rules has taken place, the Learning and Development Adviser will inform the course provider and keep a note of this on file.

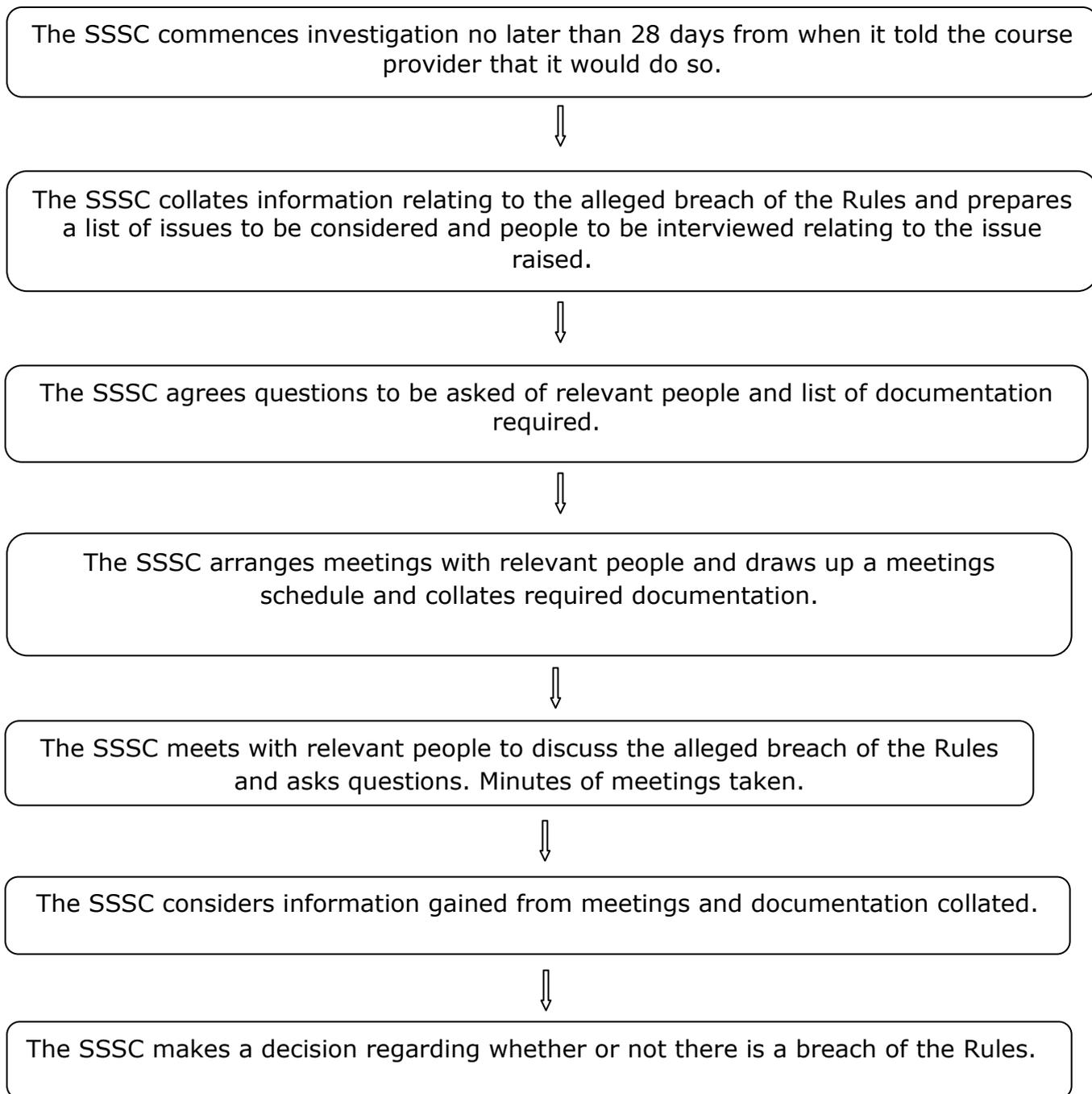
If a decision is made that a breach of the Rules has taken place, the Head of Learning and Development will inform the course provider of this, the reasons for the outcome of the investigation, and will outline agreed remedial action and timescales.

If the remedial work is completed to the satisfaction of the SSSC, within the agreed timescales, and remedies the breach of the Rules, an officer of the SSSC will advise the course provider, in writing, that it is satisfied with the action taken and will confirm that the course provider now complies with the Rules.

If the remedial work is not completed within the agreed timescales or is not completed to the satisfaction of the SSSC, the SSSC will consider whether steps should be taken to withdraw approval of the course. The same applies if a plan of work to remedy a breach of the Rules is not agreed and completed within a reasonable timescale.

If it is recommended that approval of the approved course is withdrawn, the SSSC procedure for managing the withdrawal of approval of an approved course will be implemented.

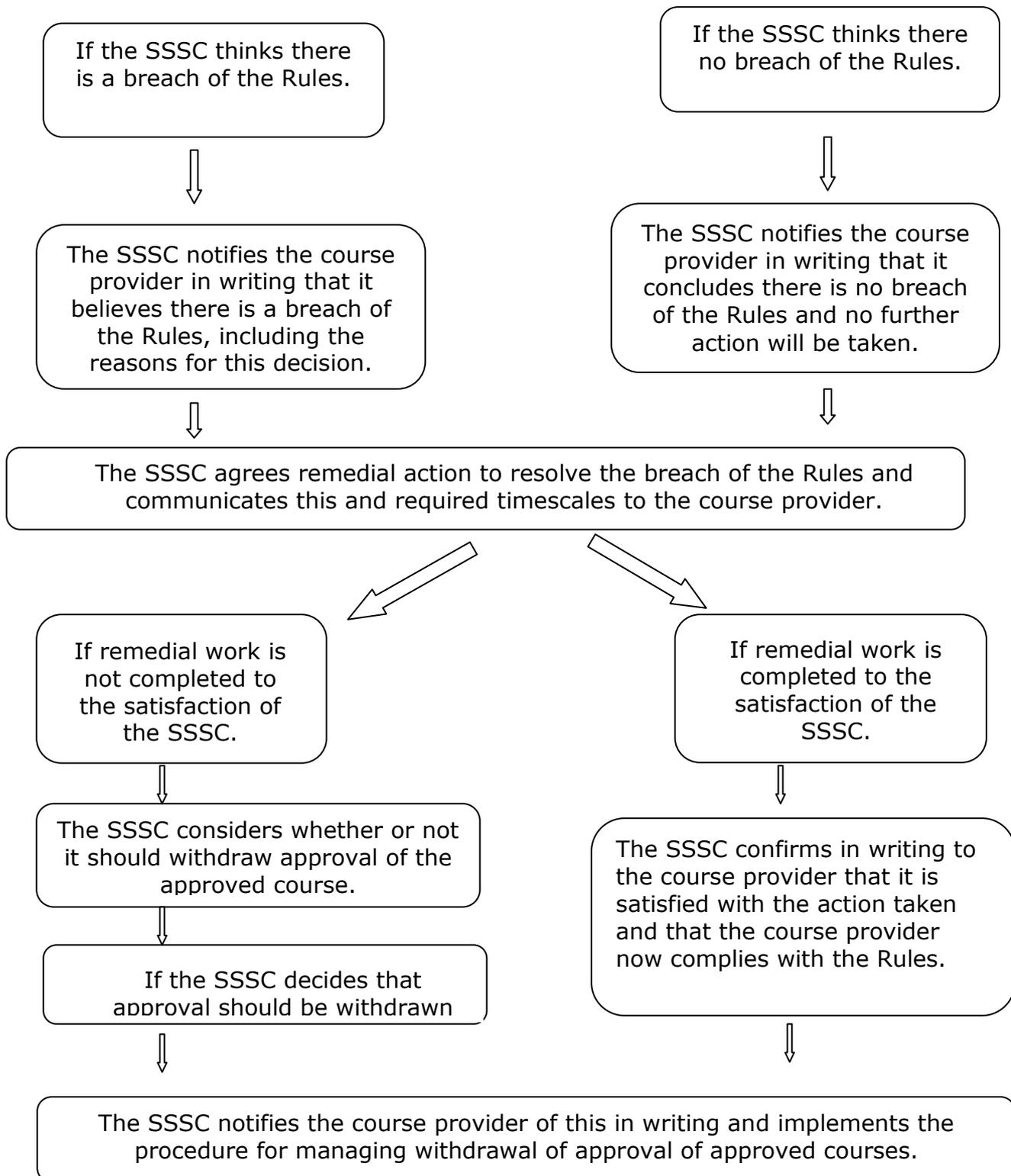
## Procedure for investigating approved courses flowchart



continued on next page

### Procedure for investigating approved courses flowchart (cont)

(The SSSC has made a decision regarding whether or not there is a breach of the Rules)



## **Section 8**

### **Withdrawal of course approval**

#### **Introduction**

This procedure may be implemented where the SSSC is satisfied that a course provider is in breach of one or more of the Rules.

#### **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for managing the withdrawal of course approval**

The following people may be involved, or affected by, this process:

- course provider - head of social work or training
- officers of the Council
- students.

#### **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically rule 16
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically rule 18
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, and as revised in 2015, specifically rule 16
- SSSC procedure for the investigation of approved courses.

#### **Forms**

There are no standard forms to complete as part of carrying out this procedure.

#### **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out:

- written representation from course provider regarding proposal to withdraw course approval
- list of reasons why approval should or should not be withdrawn
- written confirmation of decision regarding proposed withdrawal of approval.

## **Procedure for managing the withdrawal of course approval**

If, following an investigation, the SSSC is satisfied that a course provider is in breach of one or more of the Rules, it will confirm in writing to the course provider - head of social work or training a proposal to withdraw approval and the reasons for this proposal. This letter will be sent by the Head of Learning and Development.

This letter will confirm that the course provider has 28 days from the date of the letter to make written representations to the SSSC regarding any such proposal and that these should be sent to the Learning and Development Adviser who acts as a link person to the course provider or the Head of Learning and Development if there is no link adviser.

Following receipt of representations from the course provider, the Learning and Development Adviser, Head of Learning and Development and Director of Development and Innovation will review the situation and consider the representations. They will then make a decision on whether or not approval should be withdrawn. A list of the reasons for the decision will be drafted.

The Head of Learning and Development will then write to the course provider to confirm the decision.

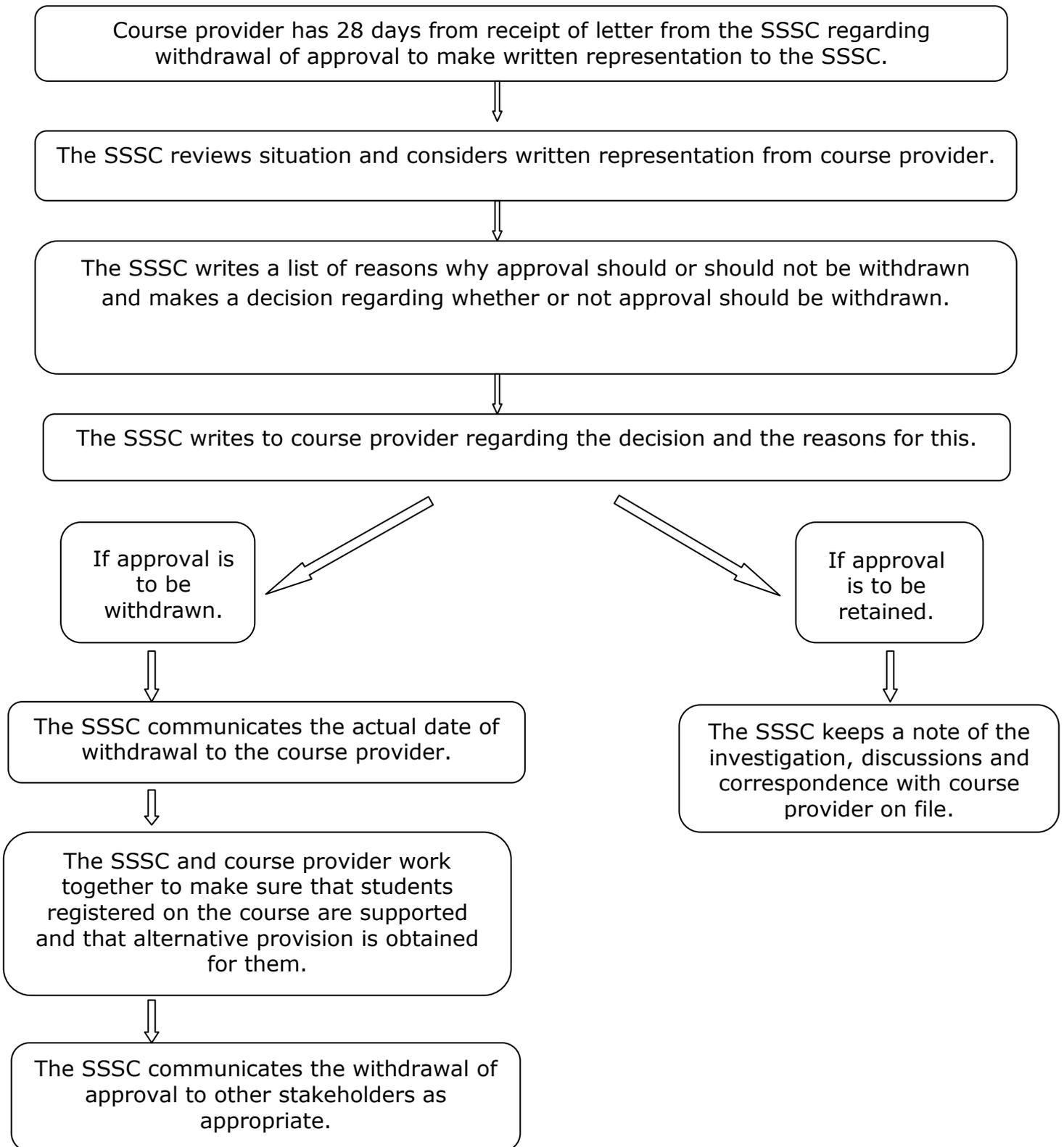
If approval is to be retained, investigation materials and subsequent discussions will be kept on file.

If approval is to be withdrawn this will be confirmed to the course provider, in writing, including the reasons for the decision and the date the withdrawal will become effective. It will also ask the course provider to consider the needs of students registered on the course and work with the SSSC to seek alternative provision for those affected.

The SSSC will continue to work with the course provider to seek alternative provision for affected students and provide additional support for, and protect these students through the period of transition to an alternative course provider.

Where approval is withdrawn, this will be communicated to relevant stakeholders via the normal channels.

## Procedure for managing the withdrawal of course approval flowchart



## **Section 9**

### **Appeals**

#### **Introduction**

The SSSC will operate an appeals process whereby a course provider may appeal to the SSSC against a decision not to approve a course<sup>2</sup>, any requirements imposed by the SSSC<sup>3</sup>, or any decision to withdraw approval<sup>4</sup>.

Reference should be made to the Rules for detail of when the decision comes into effect.

#### **List of grounds for appeal**

A course provider may appeal against a decision of the SSSC, referred to in the Rules<sup>5</sup>, on the following grounds:

- (a) that the SSSC did not take into account material information which was made known to it at the time of the decision
- (b) that new information which could not have been made available at the time of the decision and which materially affects the outcome has since become available
- (c) that the SSSC based its decision on an incorrect material fact
- (d) that the SSSC did not observe its own procedures and that this failure materially affected the decision
- (e) that the SSSC acted contrary to natural justice
- (f) that the SSSC exercised its discretion in an unreasonable manner.

#### **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for appeals**

The following people may be involved, or affected by, this process:

- Council Members
- Council officers
- an individual who is not a Council Member or officer of the Council, but who has knowledge and experience of the type of course provision which is the subject of the appeal.

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<sup>2</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rule 7; Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rule 7; and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rule 9.

<sup>3</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rules 12.6 and 13.7; Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rules 12.6 and 13.7; and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rules 14.6 and 15.7.

<sup>4</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rule 16; Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rule 16; and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rule 18.

<sup>5</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rule 21.1; Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rule 22.1; and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rule 23.1.

## **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003, specifically part VI
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, specifically part VI
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015 specifically part VI.

## **Forms**

There are no standard forms to complete as part of carrying out this procedure.

## **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out:

- written notice of appeal
- written statement in support of the appeal
- documentary evidence relating to the appeal
- appeals panel report.

## Procedure for appeals

Under the Rules<sup>6</sup>, an appeal will be heard by an appeals panel consisting of:

- two Council Members
- an individual who is not a Council Member or an officer of the SSSC, but who has knowledge and experience of the type of course provision which is the subject of the appeal.

No person may be a member of the appeals panel if that person has had any previous involvement in the matter which is the subject of the appeal.

The members of any appeals panel will also be independent of the course provider making the appeal.

A written notice of appeal must be lodged with the SSSC within 28 days of notification of the decision appealed against and must identify:

- (a) the decision being appealed against
- (b) the grounds for appeal.

A written statement in support of the appeal and any documentary evidence will also be lodged with the SSSC by the course provider within this timescale. The SSSC will lodge any documentary evidence with the appeals panel within seven days of receipt of the written notice of appeal.

The course provider and the SSSC will be provided with a copy of any documentary evidence lodged by the other party no later than 14 days prior to the hearing of the appeal.

The appeal will be heard within 28 days of receipt of written notice of appeal by the SSSC where it is practicable to do so. Otherwise the appeal will be heard as soon as reasonably practicable.

The appeals panel may hear oral submissions by the course provider and the SSSC and may consider documentary evidence and the evidence of witnesses.

The standard of proof will be on the balance of probabilities.

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<sup>6</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rule 23; Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rule 22; and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rule 25.

An appeals panel may, by majority vote, make one of the following decisions:

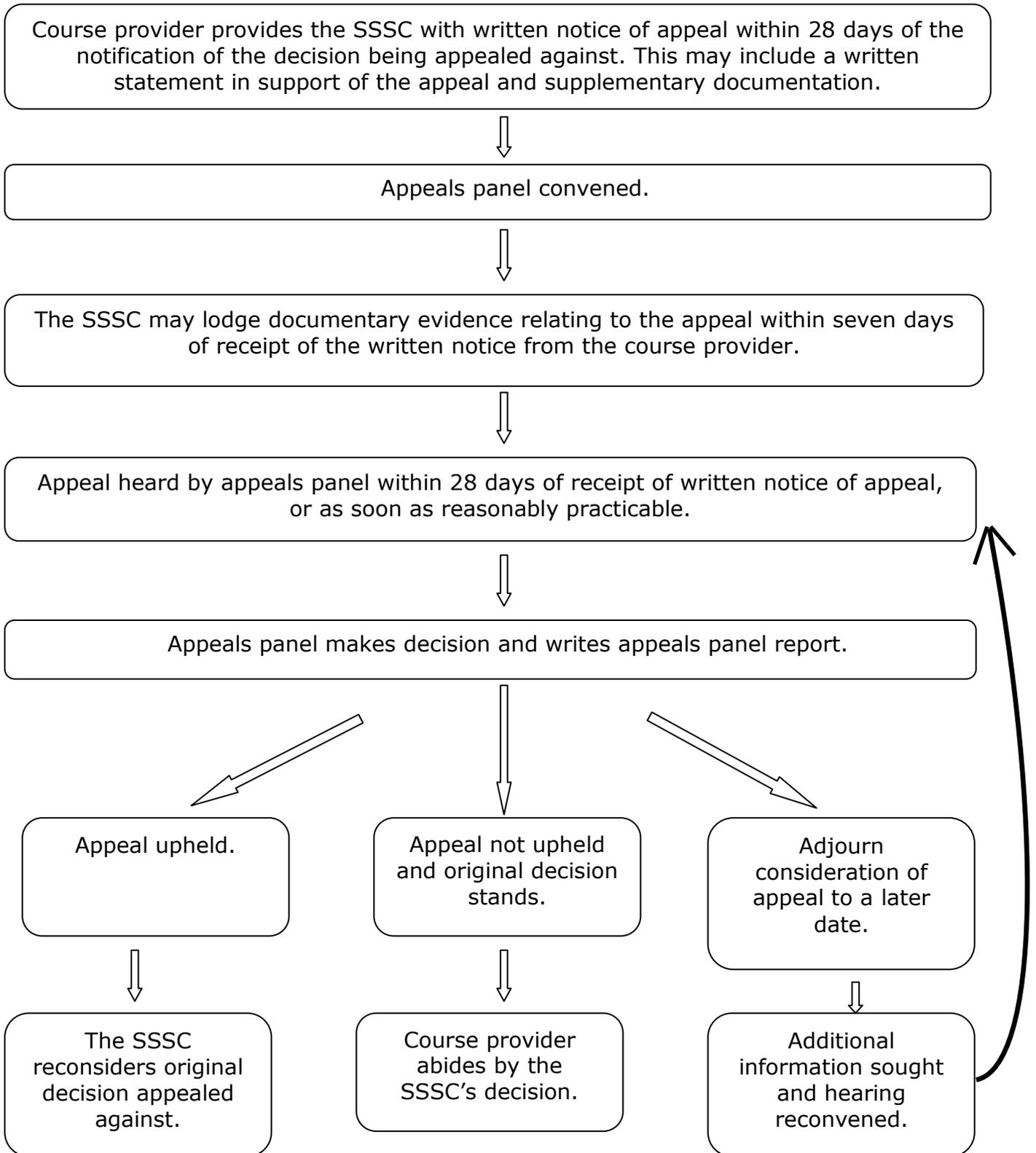
- (a) the appeal is upheld, in which case an officer of the SSSC may be directed to reconsider any material information known about, but not taken into account at the time of the decision appealed against or new material information or agree an action plan to rectify the effect of any failure to observe its own procedures which materially affected the decision, and make a new decision on the matter in terms of the Rules
- (b) the appeal is not upheld, in which case the original decision will stand
- (c) adjourn consideration of the appeal to a later date and if it thinks it appropriate to do so, require an officer of the SSSC and/or the course provider to provide additional information to the reconvened hearing.

The SSSC will issue to the course provider a written appeals panel report setting out the decision and the reasons within 14 days.

The SSSC will make available detailed information about its appeals process on the SSSC's website and in such other manner as the SSSC sees fit.

The appeals panel's decision will be final.

## Procedure for appeals flowchart



## **Section 10**

### **Complaints**

#### **Introduction**

Social work honours degree and post graduate degree courses are approved by the SSSC in terms of part 3, Section 54(1) of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

Specialist training courses and the awards in childhood practice are approved by the SSSC in terms of Section 57 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

The need for course providers to inform students about the SSSC's procedure for complaints in respect of proposed course provision are in the Rules within the criteria for the approval of courses<sup>7</sup>.

The SSSC can only investigate complaints in which the issues seem to constitute a breach of the Rules through which the course provider has been approved to deliver a course.

#### **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for complaints**

The following people may be involved, or affected by, this process:

- complaints can be made by any stakeholders of a course
- complaints will be dealt with in the first instance by the Head of Learning and Development and by officers of the SSSC to whom he/she delegates responsibility. Further investigation will be dealt with by the Chief Executive and/or his/her nominated officers or senior officers of the SSSC.

#### **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015
- Relevant course provider student and course handbooks
- Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education
- Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- Data Protection Act 1998.

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<sup>7</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rule 6.1(p); Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rule 6.1(l); and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rule 8.1(o).

## **Forms**

The complaints log is a standard form which is available with the handbook and which will be completed as part of carrying out this procedure.

## **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out. These may be completed forms (as listed previously) and/or any other relevant written documents produced as a result of carrying out the procedure:

- written notification of complaint
- written initial acknowledgement of complaint
- written response to complaint
- completed complaints log.

## Procedure for complaints

Complaints about any aspect of social work honours degree or postgraduate programmes, courses approved under the Rules and Requirements for specialist training or courses approved under the Rules and Requirements for awards developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, must first follow the internal complaints procedure for that course provider. Guidance for this should be within the course/student handbook.

If the outcome of this process is unsatisfactory, students and other stakeholders have a right to lodge a complaint with the SSSC.

Complaints about the **conduct** of any registered student undertaking a course approved by the SSSC should be made to the Fitness to Practise Department at the SSSC and will be dealt with as a discrete process.

Other complaints should be sent in writing to the Head of Learning and Development at:

Scottish Social Services Council  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

Complaints will be acknowledged within seven working days by the Head of Learning and Development.

Complaints will be investigated and a formal response made to the complainant within 21 working days.

If a complaint is upheld and the SSSC is subsequently of the view that there may be failure on the part of the course provider to comply with one or more of the Rules, then the SSSC will attempt to ensure compliance through negotiation with the course provider as described in the Rules<sup>8</sup>, and by following the SSSC procedure for managing the failure of approved courses to comply with the Rules in this handbook.

If a complaint is not upheld and the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of this process, they can ask for the course provider complaint to be reviewed by the SSSC's Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive will acknowledge the complaint within seven working days.

The Chief Executive will then review the complaint in light of the initial investigation and response.

The Chief Executive will send a written response within 15 working days of the receipt of the complaint.

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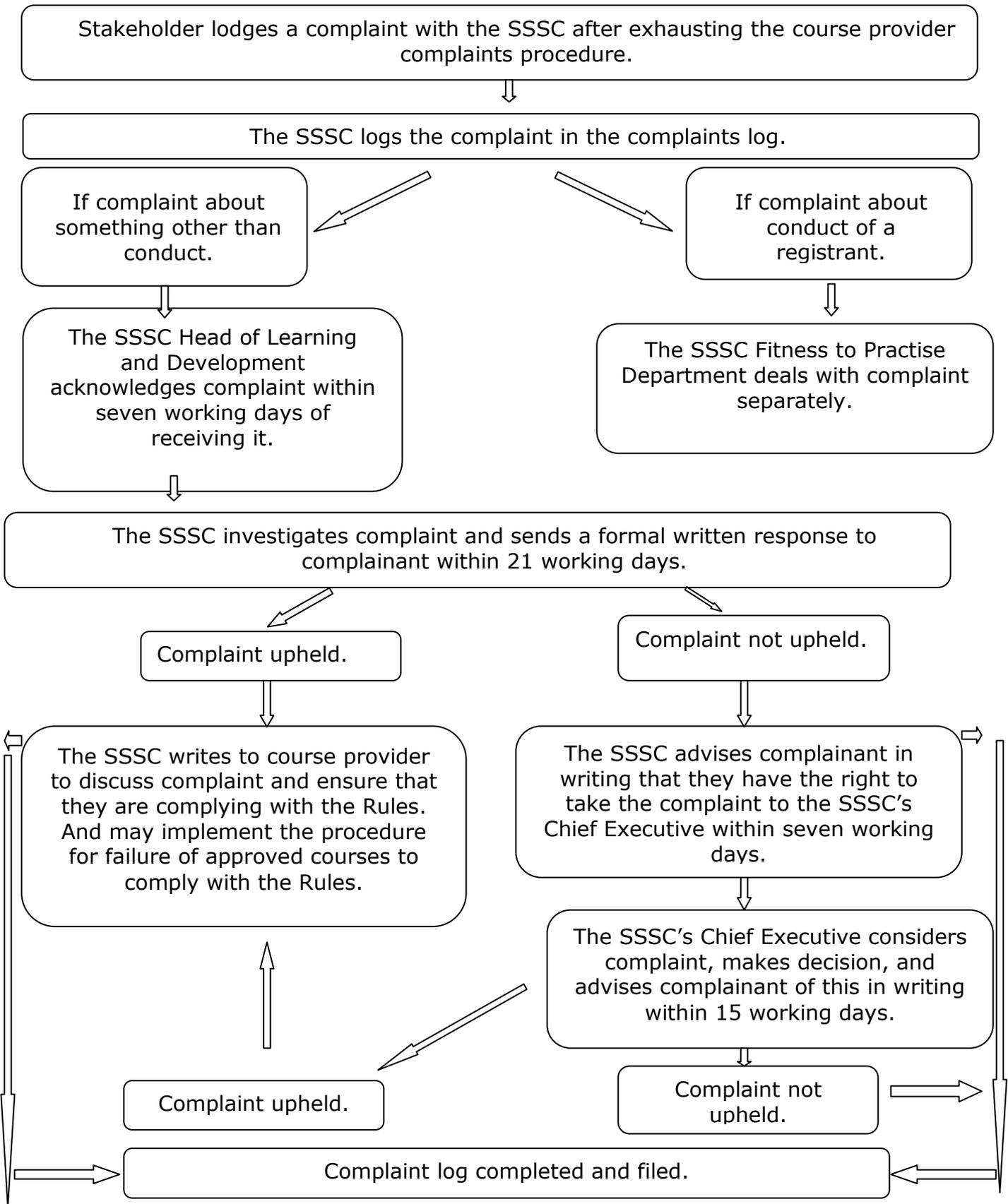
<sup>8</sup> Rules for Social Work Training 2003, rules 14.1-14.5; Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standard for Childhood Practice 2008, rules 14.1-14.5; and Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005, rules 16.1-16.5.

If the complaint is upheld and the SSSC is subsequently of the view that there may be failure on the part of the course provider to comply with one or more of the Rules, then the SSSC will attempt to ensure compliance through negotiation with the course provider as described in Rules mentioned previously.

Complaints will be managed with due regard to data protection legislation.

A record of all complaints will be kept on a complaints log held by the SSSC. Complaints will be recorded to assist in monitoring the types of issues occurring, how these are resolved and how long it takes to deal with them.

**Procedure for complaints flowchart**



## **Section 11**

### **Closing a course**

#### **Introduction**

Courses may close for a number of reasons such as being replaced by other courses. It is important that the SSSC and the course provider formalise this process in order to make sure that all students are accounted for and that the course provider and stakeholders, including Scottish Government, are aware of the closure position. During the closure process it is likely that there will be a staged progression as ongoing student assessment issues are resolved over time. Accordingly a closure process may move through each of three stages:

1. where the course provider and the SSSC are seeking a shared understanding about student completion numbers
2. where both course provider and the SSSC are awaiting outcomes of final assessment processes
3. where agreement has been reached about student completion and the final results sheet signed and supplied to the SSSC so that the closure process can be completed.

#### **People involved in, or affected by, the procedure for closing a course**

The following people may be involved, or affected by, this process:

- course provider
- officers of the SSSC
- students
- Scottish Government
- Health and Care Professions Council
- SSSC Registration Team
- external examiner or assessor.

#### **References**

The following is a list of SSSC or external documents and/or procedures which are referred to in this section and must be read in conjunction with it:

- Rules for Social Work Training 2003
- Rules and Requirements for Specialist Training for Social Service Workers in Scotland 2005
- Rules and Requirements for Awards Developed from the Standards for Childhood Practice 2008 and as revised in 2015
- SSSC procedure for monitoring.

## **Forms**

The DipSW external assessor summary closure report is a standard form which is available with the handbook and which must be completed as part of carrying out this procedure for diploma in social work courses.

In the event of the closure of other courses, closure report forms specifically for these will be developed by the SSSC accordingly, and included in the handbook for course providers to use.

## **Records**

The following is a list of the written records which will be created as a result of this procedure being carried out. These may be completed forms (as listed previously) and/or any other relevant written documents produced as a result of carrying out the procedure:

- written notification that course is closing
- completed DipSW external assessor summary closure report
- written confirmation that course has been closed.

## **Procedure for closing a course**

In the event of a course moving to closure the course provider must notify the SSSC in writing that they intend to close the course, the reason(s) for closure and the planned closure date. Where closure is anticipated for all course providers, a section requesting details of this will be included in the monitoring return completed by the course provider and sent to the SSSC.

The course provider must confirm to the SSSC in writing that there are no continuing students, nor outstanding complaints nor appeals.

On receipt of such a notification the SSSC will check through student records that all students registered with the SSSC have been accounted for and will bring to the course provider's attention any emerging differences.

The course provider will request an external assessor/examiner summary closure report from the external examiner (degree) and provide the SSSC with a copy. The course provider can use the DipSW external assessor summary closure report as a template to request this information for courses

Once the SSSC is satisfied that the final results sheet has been signed and provided to the SSSC it will confirm in writing that:

- it has received all necessary information required to confirm closure of the course
- it is satisfied that there are no continuing students or ongoing complaints or appeals
- the course has been removed from the approved list and that the revised list of approved courses will be published for stakeholder notification.

## Procedure for closing a course flowchart

Course provider notifies the SSSC in writing of its intention to close a course, including the reasons for this and planned closure date.



Course provider includes course closure details in the QAM form (or equivalent) as appropriate (procedure for monitoring).



Course provider confirms to the SSSC that there are no continuing students on the course, no outstanding complaints, and no outstanding appeals.



The SSSC checks student records it holds and brings any anomalies to the course provider's attention.



Course provider asks the external assessor/examiner to complete an external assessor/examiner summary closure report and sends a copy of this to the SSSC.



The SSSC confirms closure of the course to the course provider, in writing, once it has reviewed the external assessor/examiner summary closure report and is satisfied that all outstanding matters have been addressed.



The SSSC communicates closure of approved course to other stakeholders as relevant.



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