



Progression to Senior Social Worker

Progression Procedure

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GREAT THINGS

Durham
County Council



PROGRESSION TO SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

This procedure details how social workers within Children and Young People's Services can progress to senior social worker.

Progression is intended to recognise and celebrate a social worker's competency to work consistently at a higher level of responsibility with more complex cases. The title "senior social worker" and associated salary (grade 11) reflect the skills, knowledge and ability expected.

Progression should be seen as part of a developmental process reflecting the shared commitment and responsibility of the social worker and the organisation to develop the potential of social workers and demonstrate consistently good social work practice.

Before a social worker is considered for progression they should have completed the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), and their experience and their competence should have been monitored through the supervision process, direct observation, and Performance and Development Review (PDR).

There is no specific learning and development activity or type of work a social worker is required to have undertaken to be eligible for progression which is solely an assessment of their practice. However, social workers, like all employees working within Children and Young People's Services should be actively working towards completion of the training required for their posts if it is not currently complete. Every employee can find the training required for their post in the Durham Learning and Development System under "My Mandatory Learning".

DETAIL

1. THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER

- 1.1 Social workers who have completed the ASYE but remain on grade 9 should expect their team manager to regularly (approximately every 3 months) undertake an assessment of their readiness to progress.
- 1.2 Where the management team has assessed the social worker as ready to progress the social worker should expect to be kept informed of progress.
- 1.3 Where the management team has assessed the social worker as not yet ready to progress, the social worker should expect to have a clear development plan which sets out how they will be supported to meet the gaps identified to enable them progress, with an agreed date for review.

2. THE ROLE OF THE TEAM MANAGER

- 2.1 Each team manager should regularly (approximately every 3 months) undertake an assessment of the readiness to progress of all social workers in their team who have completed the ASYE but remain on grade 9.

- 2.2 Managers who are unsure which social workers in their team are affected can check individual records in MyView or contact developmentandlearningchildren@durham.gov.uk for a list.
- 2.3 Managers should use the “Assessment of Readiness to Progress” template to support and record their assessment and recommendation.
- 2.4 Where the social worker has completed the ASYE after 1 January 2023 with the support of our Social Work Academy, the manager should attach the final review or a short statement from one of the Academy Practice Leads about the social worker’s competence to the template.
- 2.5 The completed template should be discussed with and signed off by the service manager and strategic manager before a social worker is notified of the outcome.
- 2.5 Where the decision is made that a social worker is ready for progression, the team manager will need to authorise the change in grade within ‘MyView. For details of how to do this see the [Manager Processes – Permanent and Temporary Changes in Grade Guidance](#).
- 2.6 Where the decision is made that a social worker is not yet ready to progress, the team manager should provide the social worker with a clear development plan which sets out how they will be supported to meet the gaps identified to enable them progress, with an agreed date for review.

3. THE ROLE OF THE SERVICE MANAGER

- 3.1 The service manager should maintain an oversight of all social workers in their service who have completed the ASYE but remain on grade 9. A full list will be shared by the Workforce Development Team on a monthly basis.
- 3.2 The service manager ensure that all team managers within their service regularly (approximately every 3 months) undertake an assessment of the readiness to progress of all social workers in their team who have completed the ASYE but remain on grade 9.
- 3.3 The service manager should review and discuss with the team manager and strategic manager all assessments of readiness completed by their team managers, providing constructive challenge where required.
- 3.4 Where the decision is made that a social worker is not yet ready to progress, the service manager should ensure that the team manager provides the social worker with a clear development plan which sets out how they will be supported to meet the gaps identified to enable them progress, with an agreed date for review.

4. THE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC MANAGER

- 4.1 The strategic manager should maintain an oversight of all social workers in their service who have completed the ASYE but remain on grade 9. A full list will be shared by the Workforce Development Team on a monthly basis.
- 4.2 The strategic manager should review and discuss with the team manager and service manager all assessments of readiness completed by their team managers, providing constructive challenge where required.

- 4.3 When it is agreed that a social worker is ready to progress, the strategic manager should:
- 4.3.1 Congratulate the social worker and highlight the good practice which has led to the decision.
 - 4.3.2 Ensure that the fully completed form is forwarded to developmentandlearningchildren@durham.gov.uk

5. REVIEW OF PROGRESS

- 5.1 A quarterly review of progress will be led by the Practice Lead for Safeguarding. This review will not challenge decision making, but will aim to ensure continued improvement of the process. This will include:
- 5.1.1 A review of relevant data for the quarter.
 - 5.1.2 A desktop review of up to 5 “Assessment of Readiness to Progress” templates completed during the period.
- 5.2 A summary of findings will be shared with Children’s Social Care Management Team.

6. POST PROGRESSION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 6.1 Following successful progression, the social worker is required to:
- 6.1.1 Continue with any professional development specific to their Service Area.
 - 6.1.2 Continuous with professional development (CPD) in line with the requirements of the Social Work England professional standards and their personal development plan in order to maintain their professional registration. Every social worker in Children and Young People’s Services is entitled to 5 days per year to spend undertaking CPD.
 - 6.1.3 Make use of the professional development offer for social workers which includes a range of optional learning and development opportunities and options for career development.

7. RECOGNITION OF OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY PROGRESSION PROCESSES/ EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO APPOINTMENT IN DURHAM

- 7.1 Where a social worker can evidence that they have successfully completed the progression process of another Local Authority, or their experience is sufficient to demonstrate that they have been working satisfactorily and consistently at post progression level regardless of sector, they will be eligible for the post progression salary grade on commencement of work within Children and Young People’s Services. These competencies will be tested and need to be evidenced within the recruitment and selection process.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Assessment of Readiness to Progress