

Title/Status-	POLICY- Engagement of Former Social Workers
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## Leicestershire Procedure for POLICY- Engagement of Former Social Workers

**Applies to- All children**

### Core Values and Behaviours – the foundation for practice

#### Core Values

**Aspirational**  
Achieving  
the best  
outcomes for  
children and  
families

**Being Curious**  
Digging for  
detail using  
purposeful  
practice

**Collaboration**  
Building  
relationships  
built on the  
Signs of Safety  
approach

#### Behaviours

**Professional  
Kindness**  
Understanding  
trauma for  
children, parents  
and colleagues

**Active  
Listening**  
Listening to  
build robust  
solutions

**Outcome Focused**  
Creating  
measurable  
improvements  
for children and  
families

**Being  
Accountable**  
Everyone is  
responsible for  
high quality  
practice

## Engagement of Former Social Workers Policy and Procedure

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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enable a route back into statutory social work practice for those who have been out of practice for a number of years.

In order to facilitate this, Children's Social Care will have separate advertising campaigns to those of experienced Social Workers who were previously registered with Social Work England. It is hoped this policy will encourage more applicants for a hard to fill post and reduce recruitment pressures in this sector.

It enables Children's Social Care to recruit experienced individuals who have been out of the workforce for an extended period of time and use their skills to the benefit of the service. The council will endeavour to support their restoration, and provide a qualified social work role within the service once the process has been satisfactorily completed.

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### Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all employees of Leicestershire County Council employed under the conditions of service of the following bodies:

- National Joint Council for Local Government Service Employees

This policy applies to all social workers within Leicestershire County Council who are in the process of returning to social work practice called restoration. The definition of restoration from Social Work England is for people who have previously been registered with the Health and Care Professionals Council or Social Work England and who would like to re-join the register.

This policy and procedure does not apply to individuals employed by schools and colleges with delegated budgets.

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## Recruitment, Role & Progression

A separate advert will be used to recruit social workers who are returning to social work. A social work qualification is an essential criterion for the role, demonstrating skills and experience to meet the role of social worker, alongside information regarding a break in career and requirements for restoration.

The interview process will include specific questions to confirm qualification, last date of registration, and reasons why the individual is no longer registered. This will include asking for confirmation as to whether the individual was under any Social Work England working practice conditions previously. Pre-employment checks with Social Work England will be completed and must be satisfactory for employment to progress.

If successful, the individual will be employed as a Social Work Assistant in the first instance. This is a temporary role and measure until the restoration process is complete. Their move into the role of Social Worker will be a conditional offer based on the achievement of restoration.

Once the requirements of restoration are met, the individual will be expected to apply to Social Work England and complete the registration process. It is required that the individual completes their part of this process within 10 working days of their minimum requirements being met. This would be assessed by the Social Work Supervisor.

Once confirmation has been received from Social Work England that the individual is now successfully on the register, they will move into a Social Worker post at grade 10 or grade 11, depending on consideration of skills, experience and abilities.

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## Eligibility

Social Work England's website sets out the eligibility criteria for restoration. Details can be found here: <https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/registration/restoration-guidance/>. The eligibility criteria is set below, the employee must:

- Have previously been registered as a social worker with the HCPC or Social Work England;
- Have not been automatically removed from the register as a result of a listed offence (see below);
- Have not been subject to a removal order within the last 5 years or, if more than 5 years have passed since a removal order, must have not made an unsuccessful application to restore their registration within the last 12 months, and;
- Have not been convicted of a listed offence (see below).

For more information about listed offences see:

[The Social Workers Regulations 2018](#), Schedule 3

[The Social Work England Registration Rules 2019](#), rule 13 and rule 13(2)

## Process & Requirements

The individual would make their application to Social Work England for their restoration. The individual would then pay a restoration fee of £135 and would claim this back via their expenses on Oracle which would be reimbursed by Leicestershire County Council.

Once successful, the individual would need to pay their registration fees. This would, again, be claimed via expenses on Oracle which would be reimbursed by Leicestershire County Council. This is in line with the [Professional Registration Policy and Procedure for Health, Care and Social Workers](#).

## Update of Skills, Knowledge & Experience

During the interview process, discussions will take place to ascertain the requirements around updating of skills, knowledge and experience in line with [Social Work England requirements](#).

Prior to commencing their role, a plan will be devised with the employee in terms of what areas of knowledge and learning they require, and this plan will set out their induction and further period after that, up to 30 or 60 days as required.

If the individual has not been registered for between 2 – 5 years, they will need to have spent 30 days updating their skills, knowledge and experience. For individuals who have not been registered for over 5 years, they will need to evidence 60 days. This can be made up of supervised practice, formal study or private study. The individual will be required to complete the proportion of private study that they can do to support restoration in their own time, prior to commencing their role with Children's Social Care. Children's Social Care will provide for supervised practice and formal study that is needed.

If the individual left the register within the last 2 years, they may need to show proof of continuing professional development. Within their first month of employment, they will be offered numerous learning and training opportunities to fulfil this requirement.

Once employed, the individual will be supported within their team to achieve the required number of days of updating their experience to meet restoration requirements. This will include training sessions available via the learning hub, jointly working with experienced colleagues, and being supervised in practice with children and families.

The individual will have a nominated social worker supervisor, with a minimum of 3 years continuous post qualifying experience and registration, who will support them through this process and with their learning.

## Poor Performance during the Restoration Process

The restoration process will normally be completed within 2 months of the minimum requirements being met but may be extended in exceptional circumstances. If, however, there are concerns as to whether the individual will successfully achieve restoration, the following process will apply.

### Poor Performance during the Restoration Process

Where there are concerns regarding an employee's performance during the restoration process, these should be raised with them at the earliest possible opportunity.

The manager should meet with the employee to discuss the specific areas of concern. The manager, must:

- Remind the employee of the necessary standards and describe how the employee has fallen below these standards - using examples of practice and stating clearly what was expected;
- Explain to the employee the actual or potential result or consequences of this aspect of their practice;
- Discuss and agree a clear plan of support measures to assist the employee to improve or address specific aspects of their practice, including training, reading, observations, etc.;
- Consider if there needs to be increased management oversight of work or greater frequency of supervision or more time with the mentor to learn and reflect.

If the standard required of the employee remains unsatisfactory, the manager may move to a Formal Review Meeting. It is recommended that HR advice is sought at this point.

Whilst a review meeting should not require the employee to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative, managers should not refuse such a request if the employee feels they need support.

### Early Termination of the Restoration Process

If, during updating their skills, experience and knowledge there are serious concerns about the individuals practice which means that the Supervising Social Worker is unable to confirm with Social Work England that that the supervised practice has been completed satisfactorily, then it may be necessary to terminate the individual's employment. Managers should seek advice from Corporate HR before taking any action.

### Extending the Restoration Process

The restoration process cannot be extended on the grounds of competence or capability.

Circumstances in which the restoration process may be extended include:

- Sickness;
- Maternity or adoption leave;
- Leave of absence;
- Inadequate support during the restoration process.



In circumstances where the appropriate level of support has not been made available during the restoration process, it should be suspended for a limited time to allow for the necessary support arrangements to be put in place. Details of the suspension and support arrangements must be recorded.

### Formal Review Meeting

The manager may proceed to a Formal Review Meeting at any time during the restoration process if:

- It can be demonstrated that the employee may have misrepresented or provided false information during the recruitment process regarding their qualifications, skills, experience, etc.;
- It is apparent that the employee will be unable to satisfactorily demonstrate their suitability during the probation period despite being given appropriate support;
- The employee is unwilling or unable to take steps to enable them to satisfactorily demonstrate or improve their suitability.

Where concerns about an employee's suitability may be connected to a disability or long-term health condition, managers must ensure that up-to-date medical information has been obtained and reasonable adjustments have been considered and implemented before moving to a Formal Review Meeting.

The Formal Review Meeting must be held before the restoration process has concluded. The manager will be accompanied by an HR representative.

The employee must be given at least 5 working days' written notice of the Formal Review Meeting. The letter must clearly specify the areas in which the employee's performance is below expectations.

The employee has the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or trade union representative.

### Possible Outcomes

The Formal Review Meeting may result in:

- An extension to the restoration process to allow the employee further time to demonstrate that they can meet the required standards of performance, conduct and attendance.
- The individual's contract of employment being terminated. One month's notice will be provided.

The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee.

### Right of Appeal

An employee who is dismissed from their employment with the Council has the right to appeal this decision. The employee must submit their appeal, using the Appeal Registration Form, to their manager within 5 working days of receiving written notification of the decision to dismiss them. The appeal will be heard by a panel consisting of an independent manager and a representative from HR.

## Social Work Role and Probation

Once the restoration process is completed, the individual will move into the role of social worker. This role is then subject to the usual probation period of that role.

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### Document Control:

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