



Scottish Social
Services Council

Return to practice requirements for social workers

Return to practice requirements : What are they?

You only need to complete these requirements if you have not been registered as a social worker for two years or more.

If the length of time since your last registration as a social worker is less than two years, then you have no return to practice requirements to meet.

You need to complete the relevant continuous professional learning requirements (CPL).

If you have not met the newly qualified social work (NQS) requirements then you will need to complete these.

Return to practice requirements : What are they?

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|-------------|--|--|
| 2 – 5 years | 180 hours required | <p>Combination of supervised practice, formal and informal learning including</p> <p>Supervised practice : minimum requirement of 60 hours</p> <p>Formal learning : minimum requirement of 40 hours</p> |
| 5 + years | <p>360 hours required Combination of supervised practice, formal and informal learning including</p> <p>Supervised practice : minimum requirement of 60 hours</p> <p>Formal learning : minimum requirement of 40 hours</p> | <p>Combination of supervised practice, formal and informal learning including</p> <p>Supervised practice : minimum requirement of 120 hours</p> <p>Formal learning : minimum requirement of 80 hours</p> |

Return to practice requirements : how will requirements be applied?

- Returning social workers will be set a condition to meet the requirements within six months of re-registration if they haven't fully met all requirements at application.
- Any learning completed before re applying must have been completed within the 12 months prior to this.

Return to practice information : Where to find it?

The website holds information for people needing to complete the RTP requirements

You can find that information here: <https://www.sssc.uk.com/registration/how-do-i-register/return-to-practice-requirements-for-social-workers/>

The form that registrants will complete is found here:

<https://www.sssc.uk.com/knowledgebase/article/KA-04120/en-us>

Return to practice requirements : How should this be achieved?

Evidence for learning

Supervised Practice

Endorsed and signed off by a social worker

Formal Learning

Certified or work based learning completed

Informal Learning

Reflective accounts of learning



Return to practice requirements

Supervised practice

This must take the form of practice at a social worker level/function and is supervised by someone who is a registered social worker. This can take the form of any relevant practice social workers in Scotland do within in any relevant setting. We would accept evidence from a placement or paid employment in a role related to social work, such as social work assistant, if you have undertaken the period of practice under the supervision of a registered social worker.

It could include:

- providing information, support and guidance to individuals and their families/carers
- undertaking or shadowing assessments
- applying legislation
- signposting and liaising with other agencies.
- attending team and multi-disciplinary meetings
- case recording
- training sessions
- shadowing social workers and other professionals
- any other activities relevant to the setting

Return to practice requirements

Formal learning

This can take the form of learning through an accredited course, such as one completed through a higher education institute (HEI). It can also take the form of learning completed through a work-based environment that is certificated or evidenced through an employer or learning provider. It must be a course that is relevant to social work practice and the themes identified in the requirements.

If you were registered subject to a condition to meet your return to practice requirements and you are still undertaking this formal learning at the end of the six-month condition period, you can submit evidence from the learning provider or employer of hours/credits and learning completed towards meeting this requirement.

Return to practice requirements

Informal learning

This can take the form of any learning that is directly related to social work practice that meets the return to practice themes. You should record a reflective account of learning, alongside the time taken for you to complete it. Informal learning can include, but is not limited to:

- learning about your organisation
- conversations with colleagues
- team meetings
- shadowing your colleagues
- learning for work through books
- research, reading and listening to books, journals, articles, podcasts, programmes etc.

Return to practice requirements : what's required?

Themes



Linked to social work CPL themes:

1. Ethics, values, and rights-based practice
2. Communication, engagement and relationship-based professional practice
3. Critical thinking, professional judgement and decision making
4. Promoting wellbeing, support and protection
5. Working with complexity in unpredictable and ambiguous contexts
6. Use of knowledge, research, and evidence in practice
7. Self-awareness and reflexivity
8. Professional leadership.

Return to practice requirements : Themes

Current legislation and policy

This theme requires you to evidence learning that includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that your knowledge is up to date about how statutory social work is governed/led by relevant policy, legislation, and national guidance. For example, learning around social work statutory duties within mental health, adults with incapacity, child protection and adult support and protection legislation.

Evidence for this theme must include knowledge of the policy landscape and key current policy, for example, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), Promoting Excellence and what this means for social work practice. You are required to evidence how you have/will put your completed learning into practice.

Return to practice requirements : Themes

Social work skills, knowledge, understanding and practice

As a returning social worker, you will bring transferable skills, knowledge and experiences from previous periods of registration, study and employment. This theme requires you to evidence what learning you have undertaken to build on your previous knowledge and skills to bring your practice up to date to ensure that you are confident and competent in your ability to carry out the key functions of the social work role including professional decision making, managing risk and trauma informed practice.

Resources you might use include My Learning Badges and recently published research. Supervised practice will allow you to critically reflect on this theme and reflect on your learning. You may wish to explore specific learning for specialist areas of practice in your learning. You may also want to use this theme to critically reflect on any particular issues or reasons you left practice and if there is any impact as you return to social work.

Return to practice requirements : Themes

The key codes and standards for practice

You will need to ensure that you are confident and competent in your knowledge about the relevant codes of practice and standards that you will be working to. This will include, but is not limited to, the SSSC Codes of Practice, SiSWE and the Health and Social Care Standards. Specialist learning and role specific practice standards that underpin different areas of social work practice may be relevant for this theme, for example, the social work services in the criminal justice system: national outcomes and standards.

Adult and child protection

Every registered social worker must engage in learning that helps their understanding of how their role contributes to the wellbeing and protection of children and adults from harm regardless of setting or role.

You must ensure that your learning brings you up to date with current adult and child protection legislation and guidance and know your responsibilities as a social worker. You must evidence how you have refreshed your own learning in relation to national statutory guidance and any legislative changes since you were last registered. Supervised practice will provide you with the opportunity to evidence how you have put that learning into practice and demonstrate your competence and confidence in delivering organisational protecting people policies and procedures.