Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL)

Continuous Learning & Development Standards

GUIDANCE

for Social Care Registrants



September 2020

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Part 1: Introduction

About this document

This document is for social care workers, senior care workers and social care managers on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Register.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers state:

As a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.

There are different PRTL requirements for social care workers, senior care workers and for social care managers.

Definitions

SOCIAL CARE WORKER

The function of the social care worker is to provide service users with direct personal care, practical support and to work under direction and supervision.

SENIOR CARE WORKER

The function of the senior care worker is to provide supervision and appraisal of social care workers. Senior care workers may also be involved in the direct provision of care.

SOCIAL CARE MANAGER

The function of the social care manager is to provide a governance and accountability role for the overall operational management of the care provision, quality assurance of that provision and the supervision and appraisal of others.

Part 2: Post Registration Training and Learning (PRTL)

What is PRTL?

PRTL is the learning and development activities through which you maintain and develop your competence throughout your career and which helps you to:

- Improve the service for the people you support/care for
- Develop and improve your job skills, knowledge and behaviour
- Keep up to date with new practice developments, legislation and policy

Why is PRTL important?

Meeting Requirements

As a social care worker, you will undertake learning and development in your job. You must keep a record of all learning and development completed. As part of your registration with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, this must meet the Northern Ireland Social Care Council PRTL requirements. This will ensure you meet minimum standards for your role.

Having a learning and development plan

You should have a plan for your learning and development, discussed and agreed with your manager. This should be reviewed annually.

Providing focus for your learning

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Continuous Learning and Development Standards (Appendix 2) provide a focus for PRTL activity by specifying common standards to be met by all social care workers, alongside specific standards to be met by senior care workers and social care managers. Meeting these standards should ensure that your learning and development is relevant to your job and your knowledge and skills are kept up to date.

Providing a better service

Skilled and knowledgeable registrants provide a better service and this contributes to increasing the confidence of service users, their carers and the general public in social care services.

PRTL and Renewal of Registration

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Registration Rules require social care workers, when renewing their registration, to confirm that they have completed a minimum of 90 hours training and learning.

Renewal timescales are:

SOCIAL CARE WORKER & SENIOR CARE WORKER
FIVE YEAR RENEWAL PERIOD

SOCIAL CARE MANAGER
THREE YEAR RENEWAL PERIOD

When you apply to renew your registration, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council will ask you to confirm that you have met the PRTL requirements of 90 hours' learning and development. PRTL is a mandatory element of renewal. Failure to meet this requirement may lead to referral to a Registration Committee and may call into question your fitness to practise.

Part-time workers

PRTL requirements are the same if you work part-time as for full-time colleagues (90 hours). Part-time staff should be given similar opportunities and support for their learning and development as full time staff.

Agency workers

There is a shared responsibility for the employment agency and the social care contractor to ensure you are fit and competent to practise. The contractor must ensure you are provided with opportunities to meet PRTL requirements, including supervision and support from a line manager.

Responsibilities of Social Care Registrants

As a social care registrant, you are responsible for:

1. Undertaking a minimum of 90 hours' PRTL in a registration period
    - 5 years for a social care worker/senior care worker
    - 3 years for a social care manager
2. Planning your PRTL - which may be a mixture of formal and informal learning, in the workplace and in your own time.
3. Having a written learning and development plan agreed and reviewed annually with your employer. This should link to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Continuous Learning and Development Standards (Appendix 2).
4. Recording your learning and development. Keep a record of any training undertaken and keep a copy of any certificates of training. This is your responsibility.
5. If selected for audit, you must submit the Audit Submission Form to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council within the timescale if you wish to remain on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council register.

Responsibilities of Social Care Employers

As an employer, you are responsible for:

1. Providing induction, training and development opportunities to help registrants do their jobs effectively, and ensuring they are appropriately trained for their post within the context of the Continuous Learning and Development Standards.
2. Working with registrants on the development of a learning and development plan which is regularly reviewed. This plan should link to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Continuous Learning and Development Standards.
3. Supporting registrants to record their learning and development.
4. Support registrants to submit the Audit Submission Form following an audit request from the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

What do I need to do to meet the Continuous Learning and Development Standards?

SOCIAL CARE WORKER

Focus on the five Continuous Learning and Development Standards:

Principles of Care

Health and Safety

Social Care Skills

Communication

Safeguarding

SENIOR CARE WORKER

Focus on the five Continuous Learning and Development Standards, plus the standard on supervision and appraisal:

Principles of Care

Health and Safety

Social Care Skills

Communication

Safeguarding

Supervision/ Appraisal

SOCIAL CARE MANAGER

Focus on the five Continuous Learning and Development Standards, plus the standards on supervision and appraisal as well as leadership and management:

Principles of Care

Health and Safety

Social Care Skills

Communication

Safeguarding

Supervision/Appraisal

Leadership and Management

Your learning and development plan should link to the Continuous Learning and Development Standards that are specific to your job role (see diagram above) and (Appendix 2).

Much of your learning and development may be mandatory training which is required by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA). This may be supplemented by a wide range of activities from formal training to learning from others, reading journal articles, or relevant viewing materials. For each activity, you need to think about how this learning will improve the service you provide and benefit the people you support/care for.

There are examples of PRTL activities in (Appendix 5). There is also a range of useful resources published by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) which are available on their website at www.scie.org.uk.

You must keep a record of your learning and development (PRTL) activities and keep copies if moving between social care roles.

Part 3: PRTL Audit

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is required to audit the PRTL activities undertaken by social care workers. This is to ensure the required standards for PRTL are being maintained across all sectors of social care employment.

Twice a year, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council selects a random sample of social care registrants to submit for audit. If you have completed a learning and development plan and kept evidence/records of learning undertaken, this will enable you to submit for audit. For social care workers, this requires a completed Audit Submission Form to be returned to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Appendix 3). Social care managers have a different form to submit (Appendix 4).

Examples of completed audit forms for social care workers and social care managers can be found at www.niscc.info.There are also learning points for social care registrants included from previous audit points.

What will happen if selected for Audit?

1. You will be contacted in writing advising you that you have been selected for audit and you have 90 days to submit.
2. You should advise your employer that you have been selected for audit.
3. You should complete the audit submission form for your role as social care worker or senior care worker (Appendix 3) and for social care managers (Appendix 4), and then return to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council within the timescale.
4. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council will assess your audit submission against the PRTL requirements.
    - The outcomes of your PRTL activity.
    - The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers (Appendix 1).
    - The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Continuous Learning and Development Standards (Appendix 2).
5. If your audit meets the standards, you will receive a letter confirming competence.
6. If your audit does not fully meet the requirements, you will be given the opportunity to re-submit.
7. You must submit for audit if you wish to remain on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council register.

How to submit for audit:

Social Care Workers/ Senior Care Workers

- Gather your learning and development plan and evidence for PRTL.
- Advise your employer you have been selected for audit.
- Read examples of the Audit Submission Form at www.niscc.info.
- Complete the Audit Submission Form – (Appendix 3).
- Sign and date the form.
- Ask your manager to sign and date your form.
- Submit your form to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

Social Care Managers

- Gather your learning and development plan and evidence for PRTL.
- Advise your employer you have been selected for audit.
- Read examples of the social care managers Audit Submission Form at www.niscc.info.
- Complete the Audit Submission Form for Social Care Managers (Appendix 4).
- Sign and date the form.
- Ask your manager to sign and date your form.
- Submit your form to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

Exemption from Audit

Qualifications: if you have completed and hold a certificate for a qualification in social care that you have undertaken within the last five years, please contact registration@niscc.hscni.net or **call Customer Services on: 028 95362600** to check if you are exempt from audit.

Deferral due to exceptional circumstances

- It is important that every social care worker keeps their knowledge and skills up to date. It is appreciated there may be exceptional circumstances which are beyond your control that prevent you from submitting for audit.

- The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is prepared to consider requests for deferral of audit due to exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Registration Rules, as set out below:

- Rule 8 (9) The Council shall not refer a registrant to the Registration Committee, where that registrant has failed to complete the post registration training and learning requirements due to exceptional circumstances or where the registrant is on maternity, adoption or fostering leave.

- If you believe you will be unable to complete your audit due to maternity, adoption or fostering leave, or due to exceptional circumstances, you should contact the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Customer Services at least 20 days before your audit is due and request consideration of an extension.
  Contact: registration@niscc.hscni.net or telephone: 028 95362600

Appendix 1: Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers and Standards for Employers of Social Workers and Social Care Workers

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers

Registrants are responsible for their own professional development and for meeting their PRTL requirements. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards of Conduct **(Standard 6)** state that:

"as a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills."

This includes:

Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful, safe and effective way **(6.1).**

Undertaking relevant training and learning to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills and meeting the Northern Ireland Social Care Council post registration training and learning requirements in line with your job role
(6.17).

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards for Employers of Social Workers and Social Care Workers

Employers have a shared responsibility in supporting their staff to meet their development needs. Standard 4 of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council standards for Employers of Social Work and Social Care Workers state that:

"As a social work and social care employer, you must provide learning and development opportunities to enable registrants to strengthen and develop their skills and knowledge."

This includes:

Providing appropriate induction training and on-going learning and development opportunities to help registrants do their job effectively and prepare for any new and changing roles and responsibilities **(4.1).**

Contributing to the provision of social work and social care education and training, including effective workplace assessment and practice learning **(4.3).**

Click here to download copies of the **Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers** **and** **Standards for Employers of Social Workers and Social Care Workers**

Appendix 2: Northern Ireland Social Care Council Continuous Learning and Development Standards

Principles of Care: The service provided by the registrant is underpinned by the quality of interaction and engagement with service users, carers and families and involves applying key values such as dignity, respect, independence, rights, choice and safety. This requires the registrant to be honest, reliable and accountable for the care they provide. The registrant must demonstrate and apply understanding of the principles of care as appropriate to his/her practice, taking account of the work context and job role. This will include adherence to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards of Conduct and Practice and the values outlined in the Quality of Standards for Health and Social Care (DHSSPS 2006).

Safeguarding: The registrant must understand different forms of abuse, the signs and symptoms of abuse and have an awareness of when individuals are or might be vulnerable to abuse. Within the context of the service user group, job role and work context, the registrant should understand his/her particular responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and know how and when to act appropriately, including reporting to a senior colleague.

Communication: The registrant must know how person centred care is informed by appropriate levels and methods of communication, which can include written, verbal or other creative approaches. Within the context of his/her particular responsibilities, job role and work context, the registrant should communicate in a timely and effective way with users, carers, families and colleagues, and be able to maintain or update relevant written records to support communication.

Social Care Skills: The registrant must have skills, knowledge and understanding specific to the needs of the service user group, job role and work context. Depending on the level of responsibility and accountability for the service, direct skills and knowledge should reflect the individual registrant's specific role to provide a high quality personal care or social care service for users, carers and families.

Health and Safety: The registrant must have knowledge and understanding of the health and safety issues relevant to the context and job role and to undertake work with service users, carers and families without causing risk of injury or harm to self or others. The registrant should understand his/her particular health and safety responsibilities and, where relevant, those of other disciplines, and know how to act appropriately within the boundaries of own job role.

Compliance with mandatory health and safety training which assists organisations to meet Department of Health legislative requirements, and minimum standards against which they are regulated, is essential. This training is detailed in the Guidance for Mandatory Training in PRTL Regulated Settings (RQIA) 2010.

There are additional learning standards for senior care managers and social care managers as follows:

SENIOR CARE WORKER

Supervision and Appraisal:

Senior care workers must undertake training in respect of supervision and appraisal. Senior care workers should know how to apply skills, knowledge and understanding in their support, supervision and appraisal of staff, and be aware of the contribution this has to promote and support safe and effective social care practice.

SOCIAL CARE MANAGER

Leadership and Management:

Social care managers must undertake appropriate leadership and management skills training that addresses governance, accountability and performance management responsibilities. Social care managers should know how to apply knowledge, skills and understanding appropriate to their specific management role and be aware of the contribution this has to promote and support best practice and confidence in the quality of service provided by their organisation.

Appendix 3:

PRTL Audit Submission Form

Social Care Worker/Senior Care Worker

PRTL Audit Submission Form

Social Care Worker/ Senior Care Worker

Full name ……

Registration number……..

Employer name……..
(if in employment)

Complete electronically if possible and return via email to: registration@niscc.hscni.net

If completed manually, please return to the address below:
Northern Ireland Social Care Council
7th Floor, Millennium House
19-25 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7AQ

PRTL Audit Submission Form
Social Care Worker/ Senior Care Worker

Full name ……

Registration number ……

Employer name (if in employment) ……...

Description of your Social Care Role:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date	Duration (Hours)	Brief Description of activity	How has this activity improved your work and helped the people you Support/care for?

Date	Duration (Hours)	Brief Description of activity	How has this activity improved your work and helped the people you Support/care for?

Date	Duration (Hours)	Brief Description of activity	How has this activity improved your work and helped the people you Support/care for?

Total training and learning for period of registration (Hours): _____

Registrant Declaration

I confirm that I have undertaken the activities recorded on this form and that the details I have provided are accurate. I understand that failure to meet Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements, or the provision of false information in relation to meeting these requirements, may be considered by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as misconduct.

Registrant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Manager's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 4:

PRTL Audit Submission Form

Social Care Manager

Audit Submission Form
Social Care Manager

Full name ……

Registration number……..……..

Employer name ……..
(if in employment)

Complete electronically if possible and return via email to: registration@niscc.hscni.net

If completed manually, please return to the address below:
Northern Ireland Social Care Council
7th Floor, Millennium House
19-25 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7AQ

PRTL Submission Form

Summary of Social Care Role

Full Name ……

Registration number ……..

Employer name (if in employment) ……...

Summary of Social Care Role (Maximum 500 words)

Total words:

Northern Ireland Social Care Council

PRTL – Learning and Development Pro-forma

Name ……

Registration Number ……

Identified training Development needs	Plan to address training needs	How will this help the Registrant in their Job	Achievement Timescale

Registrant Signed…… Date:……

Line Manager/Mentor Signed:…… Date:……..

PRTL – Summary of PRTL Activities

Name ……

Registration Number ……

Date	Duration (Hours)	Brief description of activity

PRTL – Personal Statement

Name ……

Registration Number ……..……..…

Please complete the statement outline how you have met the Leadership and Management Standards:

Personal Statement (500 1500 words)

Total Word Count: ..... **Total training and learning for period of registration** (hours): .....

Registrant Declaration

I confirm that I have undertaken the activities recorded on this form and that the details I have provided are accurate. I understand that failure to meet Post Registration Training and Learning Requirements, in accordance with Continuous Learning and Development Standards, or the provision of false information in relation to meeting these requirements, may be considered by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as misconduct.

Registrant Signature ..... **Date**: ……..

Line Manager/Mentor Signature ..... **Date**: ……..

Appendix 5

Examples of PRTL activities

Work based learning:

- Discussions with colleagues
- Secondment to another team/department
- Mentoring and coaching from others
- In house training related to job role
- Mandatory in house training e.g. on health and safety, equality etc
- Work shadowing
- Learning from colleagues at team meetings/case discussions
- Journal club
- Project work
- Evidence from learning activities undertaken as part of progression on the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework

Professional activities:

- Involvement in a professional body
- Member of a special interest group
- Organising journal clubs or other specialist group
- Giving presentations at conferences
- Mentoring
- Supervising research
- Writing articles or papers

Formal Learning:

- Attending seminars/conferences
- Attending formal training programmes
- Distance learning

Self-directed learning:

- Work related reading and research (books, journals, newspapers)
- Internet research
- Social Care Council Learning Zone

Produced by:

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First printed March 2012
Last updated September 2020