

**UNIVERSITY of  
STIRLING**



Continuing Professional  
Development in Scottish  
Social Services

Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Professional Studies  
(Social Work Practice Education)

## **Selection Information for Candidates and Sponsoring Agencies**



### **The Programme**

The Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Professional Studies (Social Work Practice Education) is appropriate for experienced social workers who want to develop their knowledge and skill base in order to take on the Practice Education role with social work students on placement. It is one of the pathways within the MSc in Applied Professional Studies and Sara Hitchin, Lecturer in Social Work, has a lead role for this pathway.

The Postgraduate Certificate Applied Professional Studies (Social Work Practice Education) admitted its first students in January 2016 and three cohorts have subsequently completed the qualification to become practice educators. Some have graduated with the postgraduate certificate, others have gone on to study a further pathway as a second-year option, whilst some have

taken the practice education pathway as the second year of their PG Diploma or MSc.

Following consultation with candidates, agency assessors and learning and development colleagues, we have decided to make changes to the pathway structure in order to address pressure on candidates resulting from module overlap and student placement timing. As a consequence we have re-scheduled delivery of the first module, APSPG14 to the autumn semester with APSPG15 following in spring and APSPG16 in summer and autumn.

The three modules, undertaken over the course of 18 Months (with flexibility around placement timings), are:

Module 1: *Foundations for Effective Practice Education* (APSPG14)

Module 2: *Pedagogy and Supervision in Practice Education* (APSPG15)

Module 3: *Evidence-informed Assessment of practice* (APSPG16)

### **Entrance Requirements**

A minimum of a second class honours degree (2.1 preferred) or equivalent in social work or a related subject.

Current professional registration with the Scottish Social Services Council and experience of practice learning (e.g. as a link worker) is required.

If English is not your first language you must have one of the following qualifications as evidence of your English language skills:

- IELTS: 6.5 with 6.0 minimum in each skill
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE): Grade C
- Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English (CAE): Grade B
- Pearson Test of English (Academic): 60 with 56 in each component
- IBT TOEFL: 90 with no subtest less than 20

### **Partnership with Employing Agencies**

Many organizations have selection processes in place for Practice Education courses. We recognize that there will be variation in how organizations undertake such selection (although many will hold interviews and we would support this practice). The University of Stirling Practice Education pathway does not stipulate that a specific selection process should take place. **There is, however, an expectation that colleagues who have responsibility for selection on behalf of the employing organization, will consider the**

**following factors when selecting candidates:**

- Applicant's capacity to manage academic demands: SCQF level 11 (postgraduate)
- Applicant's experience and skills in supporting other people's learning (preferably experience of link worker role)
- Applicant's motivation to undertake the role of Practice Educator on an ongoing basis.
- Applicant's work setting (in terms of access to learning opportunities for student social workers)
- Applicant's ability to integrate theory, values and other knowledge into practice based analytical and reflective writing.
- Capacity of the applicant's team to host a student practice learning opportunity (placement) as part of the candidate's participation in the course (module 3)
- Support for the applicant in terms of workload relief to enable them to attend all teaching, engage in study and work with a student on placement.
- Agency availability of a suitably experienced Practice Assessor to work with the candidate (see appendix 1)

Timeline for admission to the Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Professional Studies (Social Work Practice Education) **commencing 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

<b>Spring 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about the course circulated to organizations and within organizations.</li> <li>• Applicants discuss with managers and Learning &amp; Development personnel.</li> </ul>
<b>Spring-Summer 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency Selection Processes</li> <li>• Consultation with pathway lead, Sara Hitchin, as required.</li> </ul>
<b>Spring-Summer 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency nominations to pathway lead</li> <li>• Nominated applicants submit the APS postgraduate application form to <a href="mailto:cpdsocialwork@stir.ac.uk">cpdsocialwork@stir.ac.uk</a></li> <li>• The programme team consider applications and confirm acceptance onto the programme. The team reserve the right to reject applications/request further evidence where applications cast doubt over candidate suitability.</li> </ul>
<b>August-September 2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-course information circulated to successful applicants.</li> <li>• Candidates attend the Induction day on <b>27<sup>th</sup> August.</b></li> <li>• Course commences on <b>11<sup>th</sup> September 2019.</b></li> </ul>

For further information please contact Sara Hitchin:

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Alternatively, please contact CPD Administration,  
E-mail: [cpdsocialwork@stir.ac.uk](mailto:cpdsocialwork@stir.ac.uk), Tel: 01786 467703

## **Appendix 1: Requirements of Agency Practice Assessor Role**

**This role offers potential CPD opportunities for experienced practice teachers/educators within your agency.**

### **Role**

- Maintain regular contact with PE Candidate to monitor and support progress through the pathway.
- Support candidate to engage with learning on the programme.
- Work with candidate and their line manager to negotiate student placement arrangements.
- Develop learning agreement with candidate, line manager and tutor (using proforma).
- Support candidate to prepare for a student placement; identifying learning opportunities, preparation of the team etc.
- Advise and support candidate in the Practice Educator role.
- Promote the involvement of service users and carers in providing feedback on social work student's progress.
- Undertake assessment of candidate's competence in the practice education role providing constructive feedback and promoting development.
- Undertake a minimum of two direct observations of candidate engaging in supervision with the student and provide timely written feedback.
- Consider evidence from the candidate's work with the student (e.g. examples of supervision records, feedback on student's reflective journals, direct observations etc.)
- Draw on evidence from candidate's academic submissions (AA has no responsibility for assessing these).

- Liaise with candidate's tutor should queries or concerns regarding academic issues arise.
- Produce an assessment report providing evidence of the candidate's competence and a Pass/Fail recommendation to the programme practice sub board (to be submitted one month after completion of the student placement).

(NB the Assessor will have no responsibility for marking candidate's academic work)

### **Person Specification**

- Agency Practice Assessors will hold a Practice Teaching/Practice Education Qualification
- Have significant experience in the practice teaching role
- Have support of managers to undertake the Agency Practice Assessor role