Achieving competence in Forensic social work
Achieving Competence in FORENSIC SOCIAL WORK

Guidance for the Advanced Award in Social Work
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In October 1994, CCETSW was asked by the Department of Health to undertake a project to enhance service standards in forensic social work through the promotion of post qualification education and training. Detailed statements of forensic social work competence published in *Forensic Social Work: Competence and Workforce Data* (CCETSW 1995a) in February were the first products of this project. The staff development and training guidance in this publication are its final outcome. The two complementary volumes are the first comprehensive package for employers, training institutions, managers and practitioners to be produced in this field.

As one of the project’s first tasks, a workshop convened in November 1994 agreed the following working definition of “Forensic social work”:

“Forensic social work is social work with mentally disordered people who present or are subject to significant risk, and as a consequence are, or could be, in contact with the criminal justice system.”

The definition is sufficiently wide to encompass work in all settings and to include work in the community with very vulnerable adults who are at risk of becoming involved with the criminal justice system. It also acknowledges that work is carried out with people whose behaviour is likely to bring them into contact with the courts. It therefore requires a high level of complex skills and knowledge, not least in the realm of assessment, planning and management.

This sensitive and often high risk work is undertaken by social workers and probation officers in a complex and rapidly changing milieu of legislative, governmental and social policy developments; on occasion with a high public profile. Section I outlines this context of practice and training.

How competence in social work with mentally disordered offenders can be achieved and recognized is outlined in Section 2. The statements of competence published in February (CCETSW 1995a) are here linked to the specific requirements for CCETSW’s Advanced Award in Social Work (AASW). That competence in social work with mentally disordered offenders can be measured against the UK standards set by CCETSW’s framework for post qualifying and advanced awards is demonstrated.

A “required” syllabus is not prescribed nor are people directed to an “off-the-shelf” course or courses. Instead, flexibility is recognized as the key to planning and delivering relevant training and staff development that reflects the complexity of individual needs and existing levels of competence, and the needs of employers. A wide range of training, staff development and accreditation routes that social workers and probation officers working in this field could take to the AASW is described in Section 3. Included is the particular guidance for managers of social work services to help them identify and promote the training needs of their staff in ways which utilize the UK standards available.
Continuing the theme of flexibility, Section 4 gives some hypothetical case examples of the routes typical social workers and probation officers might take to this award.

Section 5 shows that while it emphasizes flexibility, the guidance is also firmly located in CCETSW's established post qualifying education and training framework for the continuing professional development of social workers. This offers employers and employees a structure for the professional development of staff linked to a UK standard; provides employers with a strategy to improve recruitment and retention of experienced workers; and provides for accrediting the development and achievement of high skills of practice, policy making, leadership and management in social work.

Section 6 offers information on training resources including courses available at institutions of higher education and other potential resources which can provide relevant training experiences and other staff development support for workers in this field.

The exemplar of a national programme, one of the four routes to the AASW alluded to in Section 3, is elaborated in Appendix 1. Key legislation, guidance and reports are listed and briefly described in Appendix 2. The publication concludes with an extensive bibliography classified by relevant subject areas.

Within CCETSW's established and UK-wide framework, the following guidance and competences on which it is based offer a coherent and comprehensive resource for enhancing social work with mentally disordered offenders against a UK-wide standard for practice in any setting.

Elizabeth Wulff-Cochrane
Head of Development and Promotion Department
CCETSW
November 1995

Acknowledgements

This guidance was commissioned by CCETSW from Sheffield Hallam University as the concluding part of a project to enhance service standards in forensic social work through the promotion of post qualification education and training. CCETSW is particularly grateful to Aileen Moore and Paul Senior of Sheffield Hallam University for their major contribution to the work in preparing this guidance.
Section 1: Setting the Context

The framework for practice with mentally disordered offenders

1.1 Besides being closely regulated by policies, legislation, procedures and practice guidance, work with mentally disordered offenders has in recent years been scrutinized by a number of official inquiries which have recommended enhancement of service provision for this group of people. Some of these have been significant to the development of social work practice (see Appendix 2), notably the review of health and social services for mentally disordered offenders and others requiring similar services (Department of Health/Home Office 1992). Known as the Reed report after its chairman Dr. John Reed, this recommended that with regard to the quality of care and proper treatment of individuals they should be dealt with:

- as far as possible in the community rather than in institutional settings;
- under conditions of no greater security than is justified by the degree of danger they present to themselves or others;
- in such a way as to maximize rehabilitation and the chances of them sustaining an independent life.

1.2 The Reed report goes on to identify the main principles for practice which are that:

- mentally disordered offenders should receive specialist services as well as those mainstream services which are relevant and appropriate;
- mentally disordered offenders should receive the care and services they require in an appropriate setting which will depend on their mental state at the time and also the degree of risk they present to themselves or to others;
- good inter-agency co-operation is required in order to provide these services to a high quality;
- inter-agency co-operation is required on joint risk assessment work, setting up and running diversion schemes and providing adequate through care for mentally disordered offenders throughout the criminal justice and mental health systems;
- services should be culturally appropriate in order to meet the needs of those assessing them.

1.3 From this and other recent reports and public enquiries emerge two key themes which have been reflected in subsequent guidance and legislation. Contemporary practice should be multi-disciplinary and multi-agency in its overall approach whatever the setting. Forensic social work, in fact, reflects both themes. It is practised in a variety of settings and forms varying proportions of particular-
individuals’ workloads. The mapping exercise by Paul Senior reported in the companion volume (CCETSW 1995a) identified a wide range of staff whose workload varied from 100 per cent of their time, e.g. those working in social work departments within special hospitals and medium secure units, to those for whom working with mentally disordered offenders took up only a (varying) percentage of their working week e.g. field social workers. Similarly, a study of probation officer caseloads by Hudson, Cullen and Roberts (1993) found that 52 per cent of probation officers surveyed had supervised offenders “with mental health problems” within the previous month.

1.4 A comparatively recent service setting which in many ways underscores the need for emphasis on multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working is the development of court diversion schemes. Over 300 such schemes reflecting a variety of models have been set up to date.

1.5 Good social work and probation practice in work with mentally disordered offenders has to be supported by relevant training provision. The broad ranging Reed report made a number of pertinent recommendations including:

- post qualifying education and training should readily be available for social services and probation staff working in a range of settings who would be likely to come into contact with mentally disordered offenders;
- the Social Services Training and Support Programme should make provision for the training of staff working with mentally disordered offenders;
- CCETSW should provide guidance on the particular skills required by social workers and probation officers involved in the care and management of mentally disordered offenders;
- CCETSW should consider the need for an additional specialized training module which addresses the skills and knowledge needed by social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders or similar patients in secure settings.

1.6 The companion volume (CCETSW 1995a) articulated the particular skills and competences required by staff working in this field. When developed, they are appropriately pitched at advanced level. Forensic social work competences are linked to CCETSW’s requirements for its AA$W in the following section.
Section 2: Achieving Competence through the Advanced Award in Social Work

2.1 This section takes forward the training implications of the recommended service improvements outlined in Section 1. It explains how the statements of competence which have been defined for social work with mentally disordered offenders can be clearly reflected in the AASW requirements within CCETSW’s post qualifying education and training framework. It demonstrates to employers and employees that continuing professional development and achievement of competence in this field has an established set of UK standards by which it can be promoted, directed, assessed and recognized. This system enables a wide and flexible range of routes to be planned and implemented towards the achievement of both the competences required in forensic social work and CCETSW’s AASW.

2.2 CCETSW’s post qualifying education and training framework has the following principal components:

- post qualifying and advanced levels of professional development leading to two CCETSW awards;
- a credit accumulation and transfer scheme (CATS) linked to academic awards;
- concentration on assessment of learning outcomes;
- implementation through collaborative arrangements between agency and educational institutions acting as regional PQ consortia and established throughout the UK;
- a UK-wide standard of education and training established and maintained by CCETSW.

These are described in Paper 31 The Requirements for Post Qualifying Education and Training in the Personal Social Services: A Framework for Continuing Professional Development (CCETSW 1992) which should be consulted for further detail.

2.3 Two of the above components are of particular significance to social workers and employers in forensic social work: assessment and credit accumulation. Post qualification and advanced award credits will be awarded for professional competences by regional PQ consortia following their assessment of evidence provided by candidates. This must show a coherent, integrated and progressive approach to the continuing professional development and achievement of competence in social work with mentally disordered offenders for candidates in this field.
2.4 To be awarded credits for the AASW candidates must demonstrate they have met the specific requirements for that award. The competences for social work with mentally disordered offenders published in February (CCETSW 1995a) were recognized as corresponding to the level of the AASW.

2.5 It follows that the appraisal of existing levels of competence and of the training and development needs of social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders can be guided and directed by these competences as defined. However, all involved need to be clear about which competences may or may not be met and which may remain to be met in individual cases. Equally, it will be important for all to be clear about how competences that are met and any gaps to be filled, correspond to the specific AASW requirements. This will clarify what future training and staff development plans may need to be assembled and how progress towards the award can be measured and accredited.

2.6 One of the key strengths for employers and workers is that progress towards the award can be managed within the context of everyday work demands and can be focussed on current practice. However, in order for these benefits to be maximized, staff, managers and trainers will need to ensure that the work undertaken and the evidence gathered is relevant to the particular award.

2.7 Figure 1 provides a map of the competences for social work with mentally disordered offenders as they relate to the requirements for the AASW. Forensic social work competences are subsumed under the following eight key tasks:

1. assessment
2. care planning and management
3. report writing
4. working with individuals and families
5. managing crisis and trauma
6. maintaining effective social supervision
7. managing external systems
8. complementary professional activity.

2.8 These tasks, underpinned by appropriate knowledge and understanding, are further broken down into 64 activities describing the competences required for social work with mentally disordered offenders. For example, key task 1: Assessment includes the activity 1.1: Gather data and information for assessment and risk analysis shown in the right hand column against the corresponding AASW requirement (v).

2.10 The competences are extracted from Forensic Social Work: Competences and Workforce Data (CCETSW, 1995a) and for ease of cross-reference are numbered as they appear in that publication and as in the above example.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCETSW's AASW requirements</th>
<th>Activities describing forensic social work competences</th>
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<td>(i) Candidates will have made a significant contribution to the development, delivery and evaluation of the service provided in a chosen area by demonstrating:</td>
<td>7.1 Manage inter-agency negotiation and networking in working across professional boundaries;</td>
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<td>(i)(a) Ability to analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups.</td>
<td>7.3 Manage a wide range of information about an individual and determine effective and appropriate communication to others;</td>
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<td>(i)(b) Ability to research, plan, implement and evaluate strategies for improvement or change.</td>
<td>7.4 Manage conflicts of interests.</td>
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<td>7.5 Make links with local services and communities and marshal resources.</td>
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<td>7.6 Access external service provision so as to meet own service objectives.</td>
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<td>7.7 Undertake, develop and utilize practice research and evaluation.</td>
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<td>8.8 Undertake, develop and utilize practice research and evaluation.</td>
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(ii) **Review and critically evaluate the value base of their work in the light of continuing social and political change and demonstrate the ways in which these values are integrated and have been sustained in their work.**

<p>| (iii) <strong>Demonstrate over a significant period a high standard of anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice and be able to define and develop policies and practices which reflect these values.</strong> |
| 2.1 Design care plans in line with risk assessment and long-term needs. |
| 2.2 Ensure individual has continuity and consistency of care. |
| 2.3 Ensure the appropriate resources are applied at the optimum time. |
| 2.4 Tailor care planning to the needs of the individual within a family and social context. |
| 2.5 Balance the conflicting demands of public safety while optimizing quality of life. |
| 4.2 Identify the need for independent and specialist advocacy and make arrangements for these needs to be met. |
| 4.4 Maintain a holistic approach to intervention and actively seek to promote services which address the needs of disadvantaged groups. |
| 8.8 Undertake, develop and utilize practice research and evaluation. |
| 8.9 Contribute to national and international development in forensic social work. |
| 8.10 Maintain professional experience by keeping up to date on social work developments. |
| 8.11 Review and critically evaluate the value base of forensic social work in the context of multi-professional work and demonstrate how such values are sustained. |
| 8.12 Analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups, including the impact of race and culture, to achieve improvement. |
| 8.13 Analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups in line with financial priorities. |
| 1.4 Focus assessment on individual needs. |
| 2.4 Tailor care planning to the needs of the individual within a family and social context. |
| 3.1 Ensure reports and their presentation are fit for their purpose. |</p>
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<th>Requirement (iii) continued.</th>
<th>3.2 Ensure reports reflect in their recommendations the position of mentally disordered offenders in relation to health, social services and the criminal justice system.</th>
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(iii) Demonstrate extensive and up-to-date knowledge of theoretical models, methods, policies and law in their chosen area, including necessary knowledge of developments within the UK, and show a capacity to evaluate critically their use.

| 1.2 Undertake assessment and analysis of risk in relation to the public, staff and offender. |
| 1.3 Ensure the interrelationship between offending behaviour and mental disorder is reflected in the assessment and treatment. |
| 1.5 Identify and assess risk of suicide and self-harm. |
| 1.6 Assess the potential for diversion at the point of arrest and in the court system. |
Co-ordinate planning in the context of overlapping sets of legislation and other professionals within forensic services.

Implement discharge arrangements including effective liaison.

Develop strategies to co-ordinate the implementation of care plans in conjunction with other agencies.

Ensure reports reflect in their recommendations the position of mentally disordered offenders in relation to health, social services and the criminal justice system.

Engage with individuals and families to ensure they understand how systems operate and their rights within those systems.

Seek the least restrictive option commensurate with protection of the public.

Select, apply and critically evaluate a wide range of treatments and other interventions available for this client group and demonstrate a high level of expertise in specific therapeutic interventions.

Apply interventions which encompass an understanding of the interrelationship between mental vulnerability and offending behaviour.

Help people to gain access to appropriate crisis support.

Develop, implement, monitor and review supervision plans.

Apply national and local guidance pertaining to social supervision.

Co-ordinate the contribution of other disciplines and agencies to social supervision.

Demonstrate ability to contextualise assessments and communication with other multi-disciplinary professionals.
| 1.1 | Gather data and information for assessment and risk analysis. |
| 1.2 | Undertake assessment and analysis of risk in relation to the public, staff, and of re-offending. |
| 1.3 | Ensure the inter-relationship between offending behaviour and mental disorder is reflected in the assessments undertaken. |
| 1.4 | Focus assessment on individual needs. |
| 1.5 | Identify and assess risk of suicide and self-harm. |
| 1.6 | Assess the potential for diversion at the point of arrest and in the court system. |
| 1.7 | Ensure assessments can be understood by relevant audiences. |

| 4.1 | Engage appropriately with individuals, taking account of their mental state. |
| 4.2 | Identify the need for independent and specialist advocacy and make arrangements for these needs to be met. |
| 4.3 | Engage with individuals and families to ensure they understand how systems operate and their rights within those systems. |
| 4.4 | Maintain a holistic approach to intervention and actively seek to promote services which address the needs of disadvantaged groups. |
| 4.5 | Seek the least restrictive option commensurate with protection of the public. |
| 4.6 | Select, apply, and critically evaluate a wide range of treatments and other interventions available for this client group and demonstrate a high level of expertise in specific therapeutic interventions. |
| 4.7 | Work with families and individuals who are in conflict with or hostile to the purposes for which the service is provided. |
| 4.8 | Work with a range of conflicts which result from an individual's offending behaviour, within their support networks and immediate social contexts. |
| 4.9 | Prepare families and communities for resettlement of individuals in the community. |
4.10 Work in collaboration with users and carers.
4.11 Maintain clarity of role in negotiating with families and individuals.
4.12 Apply interventions which encompass an understanding of the inter-relationship between mental vulnerability and offending behaviour.
4.13 Help individuals to increase the element of self control in their lives, taking into account the constraints of the setting in which they are located.
5.1 Focus on information gathering at times of crisis.
5.2 Identify the different needs of all individuals and groups involved in traumatic incidents.
5.3 Prioritize objectives for immediate action and the longer term.
5.4 Support individuals and families through trauma and post-trauma.
5.5 Help people to gain access to appropriate crisis support.
5.6 Develop and implement appropriate strategies to minimize potential and actual risk/danger
2.6 Co-ordinate planning in the context of overlapping sets of legislation and other professionals within forensic services.
2.8 Manage any delegation of roles.
2.10 Develop strategies to co-ordinate the implementation of care plans in conjunction with other agencies.
2.11 Research, plan, implement and evaluate strategies for improvement or change.
7.3 Manage a wide range of information about an individual and determine effective and appropriate communication to others.
8.2 Work independently and make constructive and innovative use of consultation and management processes.

(vi) **Demonstrate skills in supervision and consultation.**

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<td>Create appropriate opportunities for assisting debriefing of staff following crisis intervention.</td>
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<td>Provide consultancy for other forensic social workers, other social workers in the personal social services and other professionals.</td>
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<td>(vii) Have highly developed skills in communicating and working effectively and constructively with other professionals in other disciplines across organizational and service boundaries.</td>
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<th>(viii)</th>
<th>Be able to manage innovative and resourceful change in their chosen area including the use of information technology wherever appropriate.</th>
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<th>Assess the potential for diversion at the point of arrest and in the court system</th>
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<td>Analyse practice and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups in line with financial priorities.</td>
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<td>(ix) Be able to work independently and be accountable, and make constructive and innovative use of consultation and management processes.</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Manage work to ensure personal safety.</td>
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<td>Work independently and make constructive and innovative use of consultation and management processes.</td>
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<td>Utilize appropriate consultation skills to minimize harm to self and others.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8.12</td>
<td>Analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups, including the impact of race and culture, to achieve improvement.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8.13</td>
<td>Analyse practice and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups in line with financial priorities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(x) Demonstrate reflective and analytical practice by showing, over an extended period, the ability to form clear judgements on their own and others’ work, implementing, managing and evaluating any changes that are required.</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>Research, plan, implement and evaluate strategies for improvement or change.</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
<td>Select, apply and critically evaluate a wide range of treatments and other interventions available for this client group and demonstrate a high level of expertise in specific therapeutic interventions.</td>
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<td>5.6</td>
<td>Develop and implement appropriate strategies to minimize potential and actual risk/danger.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requirement (x) continued.</td>
<td>8.8 Undertake, develop, and utilize practice research and evaluation.</td>
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<td>8.9 Contribute to national and international developments in forensic social work.</td>
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<td>8.10 Maintain professional experience by keeping up to date on social work developments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.11 Review and critically evaluate the value base of forensic social work in the context of multi-professional work and demonstrate how such values are sustained.</td>
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<td>8.12 Analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups, including the impact of race and culture, to achieve improvement.</td>
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<td>8.13 Analyse practice and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups in line with financial priorities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>(xi) Demonstrate awareness of relevant policy, practice and institutions within the European or international context in order to evaluate their own work.</th>
<th>8.8 Undertake, develop, and utilize practice research and evaluation.</th>
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<td>8.9 Contribute to national and international developments in forensic social work.</td>
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<td>8.13 Analyse practice and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups in line with financial priorities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>(xii) Provide clear leadership in their chosen field, based on their extensive knowledge, high level of interpersonal skills, explicit values and acknowledgment of responsibilities, within their role.</th>
<th>5.6 Develop and implement appropriate strategies to minimize potential and actual risks/danger.</th>
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<td>7.1 Manage inter-agency negotiations and networking in working across professional boundaries.</td>
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<td>8.1 Manage work to ensure personal safety.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8.4 Create appropriate opportunities for assisting de-briefing of staff following crisis intervention.</td>
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</table>
8.5 Provide opportunities for the learning of other staff and, as appropriate, contribute to the training of others.

8.6 Provide consultancy for other forensic social workers, other social workers in the personal social services and other professionals.

8.7 Develop skills in use of appropriate information technology.

8.8 Undertake, develop, and utilize practice research and evaluation.

8.9 Contribute to national and international developments in forensic social work.

8.10 Maintain professional experience by keeping up to date on social work developments.

8.11 Review and critically evaluate the value of forensic social work in the context of multi-professional work and demonstrate how such values are sustained.

8.12 Analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups, including the impact of race and culture, to achieve improvement.

8.13 Analyse practice and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups in three with national priorities.

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<td>Core Assessment Criteria</td>
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<td>2.10 To confirm that the competences in Figure 1 are performed at an advanced level in the field of social work with mentally disordered offenders, they should be demonstrated by evidence of performance which reflects seven core assessment criteria. Their rationale and description are stated in <em>Forensic Social Work: Competence and Workforce Plan (CCETSW 1995a)</em> as follows:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment of Competence</td>
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<td>Forensic social work in multidisciplinary contexts with complex, vulnerable people has the paramount aim of public protection. It therefore demands competence, at a high level, in undertaking activities demonstrating the required level of performance. Candidates must show they are working at an advanced level. They will be required to work as individual professionals, with a high level of personal credibility and expertise to a high standard, and to demonstrate a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice. This will require knowledge and understanding of the systems of mental health, criminal justice, and the personal social services, and how they operate, coordinated for the benefit of clients, working with a high level of professional, organizational and interpersonal skills. Each task and set of activities should therefore</td>
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demonstrate performance which reflects the seven core assessment criteria below.

(1) Active management of four inter-related activities - direct practice, inter-agency and multi-disciplinary work, resource management and strategic and development work.

(2) Work to a high standard of direct practice with an explicit anti-discriminatory value base.

(3) Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of self in working with others.

(4) Demonstrate ability to analyse, develop and deliver improved services through research and planned interventions.

(5) Demonstrate ability to integrate fully formal and informal learning into a comprehensive range of professional activities.

(6) Demonstrate a specialist and highly developed knowledge of models, methods, policies, law and understanding in forensic social work in the context of national and international developments.

(7) Demonstrate and model good practice through consultancy, teaching and supervision in forensic social work. (CCETSW 1995a, page 25)

**Equal Opportunities**

2.11 Candidates for the AASW must demonstrate that their practice accords with CCETSW's equal opportunities policy. This means that candidates will:

- accept and respect individual rights and circumstances and understand how these affect the delivery of services;
- learn how to counter unfair discrimination, racism, poverty, disadvantage and injustice in ways appropriate to their situation and role.

Such practice will require underpinning knowledge and understanding of:

- how to ensure that all forensic social work service users are treated fairly, openly and with respect;
- how to ensure that all activity is consistent with best antiracist and anti-discriminatory practice;
- contemporary research and theories in respect of the occurrence and distribution of forensic social work users;
- models of work countering stigmatization, discrimination, alienation, scapegoating and institutionalization;
- theories of discrimination and oppression in relation to mentally disordered offenders;
- agency policies for equal opportunities and anti-racist social work practice.

CCETSW's full equal opportunities policy statements are reproduced in Appendix 3.
Section 3: Routes to the Advanced Award in Social Work

Appraisal, selection of training, staff development and accreditation routes for social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders

3.1 There are several routes by which continuing professional development and creditable achievement of competence for social workers with mentally disordered offenders can be promoted, secured and recognized. Finding and implementing the most appropriate routes that reflect the needs, aspirations and existing levels of expertise of practitioners; the needs, objectives and requirements of employers, the resources available and which maximize the opportunities offered by training providers, requires a systematic approach.

3.2 This should appropriately begin where practitioners and employers meet i.e. in the workplace. Employers need to be able to ascertain, to begin with, how many of their staff are working with mentally disordered offenders; to what extent and with what levels of competence. Ascertaining "how many" and "to what extent" may be less straightforward in local authority or probation departments; for example, than in dedicated forensic social work units but is no less necessary. The Statements of Competence in Forensic Social Work: Competence and Workforce Data (CCETSW 1995a) and the present guidance offer a framework for both mapping workforce profiles and for measuring competence levels and needs in detail.

3.3 This section therefore begins by offering practical advice to agencies and managers on approaching these responsibilities and on identifying the most appropriate and viable routes to take. This will be of value to practitioners also, as the appraisal and development of competence should be a co-operative, two-way process for outcomes to be purposeful and achievable.

3.4 Social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders are working in a complex system at the interface of the criminal justice system, the mental health system and personal social services. Many will be experienced, knowledgeable, and often expert in particular areas of this work. Work on statements of the competence required included a workforce mapping exercise (CCETSW, 1995a) which identified a range of workers in different settings who said their training needs were at the level of the CCETSW Advanced Award in Social Work. A typical profile included:

- many years experience in social work and probation
- pursuit, often in an ad hoc way, of post-qualifying level training
- jobs with a high degree of responsibility and autonomy
- a lack of training at an advanced level required to enhance and develop their skills.
The statements of competence reflect the areas of complex work which people must undertake regardless of whether they work full-time or only a small proportion with mentally disordered offenders. The level of skills and expertise required will be the same if a worker has only one mentally disordered offender on their caseload, or holds a specialist job working in a forensic psychiatric setting. In some instances workers in specialist forensic units may have access to the expertise of other professionals and to in-house training events, not normally available to an ASW in a community mental health team for example supervising one or two people on a restriction order in the community.

The AASW could also be relevant for managers as managers. Part of the competence focuses is management so that candidates could choose this to be the focus of the material they present for assessment.

Because AASW requirements also apply to other areas of work, candidates may not wish to be assessed only on competences specifically relevant to social work with mentally disordered offenders. The flexibility of the system means that workers in, for example general mental health, could use part of their work towards gaining credit in areas outside forensic social work that relevant to their own job.

Managers of social workers or probation officers may well be working within a system of staff development and review, which helps both manager and worker to identify the areas of work which need to be developed, as well as recognizing those areas of competence already gained. Staff development packages and systems operate differently in many agencies. However, there is usually/ at least some scope for workers to gain recognition of their progress beyond their basic qualification training and skills.

The common features of staff development/review are:
1. an overall view of the competences that a person needs to do their job, i.e. through their job description; an interview with their manager and themselves in which the common areas are identified; or a look at service delivery outcomes required;
2. relating competences to the aims and objectives of the organization, the particular work setting, and any specific role within that setting that the person undertakes;
3. identification of any particular areas of interest or expertise which (a) the manager would like the worker to develop or (b) the worker chooses to develop within the scope of their job;
4. a career plan for the worker which might include looking at setting annual targets for training and professional development, which links into with the service's projected needs;
5. records of agreement via learning contracts by both parties;
6. records of achievement which can be utilized for accreditation of prior (experiential) learning.
3.10 A manager also needs to address the constraints of the resources available for development and training. However, most organizations and departments leave scope for professional development. Indeed, it could be argued when looking at the practice guidance in the area of working with mentally disordered offenders that no organization can afford to ignore recommendations in the Reed Report (DH/Home Office 1992) for improved training in the area of risk assessment and multi-agency working for social work and probation staff. The benefits to the organization and managers are a better equipped workforce enabling services to be improved and developed. The benefits for individuals undertaking training can include enhanced work satisfaction and clear, regular feedback as well as a sense of development in undertaking a training programme.

3.11 Promoting training and staff development at advanced level necessarily involves line managers in:

- offering advice regarding their worker's ability to undertake work at this level and, where appropriate, writing an assessment of their ability for entry to study or other forms of staff development;
- advising staff with regard to which options they should choose, or knowing where to get expert training advice to help them choose;
- providing support, encouragement and the opportunity to help workers relate training back to their practice;
- enabling relevant resources and practice opportunities in the work base to be available in order that workers can access appropriate work experience in order to demonstrate and develop the various competences.

3.12 The checklist in Figure 2 is designed to help managers think through the detailed issues for their staff in pursuing the AASW. The questions focus on entry to the AASW; choosing a pathway; local opportunities; access to resources; and future development of the worker. It could be used effectively in conjunction with existing organizational staff review processes.
Figure 2 Checklist for Managers

(This checklist is designed to assist managers in their approach to staff appraisal. It may be useful to keep it on relevant files to use at critical stages of progress).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points to Check</th>
<th>Current position of staff member</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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**ENTRY TO AASW**

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3. Does your worker have access to opportunities where they can gain experience and be able to demonstrate competence?

Given the centrality of access to practice, demonstrating competence in complex situations is a necessity.

4. Does your worker have the ability to undertake training at this level?

Does the quality of their work reflect expertise and the capacity to offer leadership at an advanced level?

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26
### CHOOSING A PATHWAY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>7. Is your worker primarily interested in:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) practice</td>
<td>Are there sufficient practice opportunities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) management</td>
<td>If the worker is primarily a manager would an advanced award in management be more appropriate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) education and training</td>
<td>Does the worker mainly train in the area of forensic social work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) research</td>
<td>Would current work lend itself to in-depth study relevant to the AASW in forensic social work?</td>
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| 8. Drawing on the above would you suggest that your worker takes a dedicated route (i.e., practice, management, training or research); a combination of routes or pursue a different advanced award altogether? | \[
\text{It could be best if undertaking a part-time route to keep options open? Also check with the requirements of the AASW as they will require some evidence in all four areas.}
\]

### LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Which is your local PQ Consortium?</th>
<th>Who is the contact point for your agency?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Is your agency a member?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What training is currently available in your area either:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) in-house</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) in local consortium training</td>
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<tr>
<td>(c) educational institutions</td>
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(Figure 2 continued on page 28)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>11. Does the content of courses match your workers' needs?</td>
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<td>12. What feedback have you and 'your training department?</td>
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<td>13. If you work part-time, how many hours a week?</td>
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<td>14. What do you feel is the quality of work undertaken?</td>
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<td>15. How do you feel about your job?</td>
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<td>16. What changes in your work situation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACCESS TO RESOURCES</td>
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<td>17. What access to the resources do you feel you need?</td>
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<td>18. What access to the resources do you feel you do not need?</td>
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<td>19. What access to the resources do you feel you are restricted to?</td>
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<td>20. What access to the resources do you feel you are not restricted to</td>
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**Figure 2 continued.**
3.13 As well as appraising the training needs of social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders by utilizing the information charted in Section 2, employers need a clear idea of possible future routes for training. The following four distinct, though overlapping, routes are discussed below:

1. Individual pathways for experienced workers
2. Local in-house staff development programmes
3. A local course-based training programme
4. A national programme.

As flexibility is built into the process, it may be possible for candidates to gain credits for the award from several outlets. There may also be sound reasons for developing routes which formally incorporate several different training packages. This might include utilizing existing training, allowing a modular approach to credit accumulation, and enabling different aspects to be accessed and different training locations.

(1) Individual pathways for experienced workers

3.14 Experienced workers can be assessed and accredited according to the level and range of their competences in social work with mentally disordered offenders, enabling them, if they so wish, to use this assessment as a basis for planning further professional development. Advice and support on this procedure is available through a CCETSW-approved regional PQ consortium. Such assessment leads to the award of an academic credit to the PQ level at the level of the award the individual wishes.

3.15 The fact that post-qualifying awards in social work are between five years means that many workers may have been working at advanced level without an award.
In seeking to gain the AASW, workers will need to know how they can utilize such learning to gain credit. The process of gaining credit retrospectively for the skills and competence they have already acquired will be available through regional PQ consortia.

In addition to gaining retrospective credit, the experienced worker can work towards an AASW through arranging their own learning contract directly with the relevant PQ consortium via a process of work-based learning, a crucial feature of any competence-based programme of continuing professional development. Whatever the route, workers will need to be able to utilize their work settings to demonstrate and thus provide evidence of their competence. Linking staff development reviews and appraisal with records of achievement will enable workers to collect relevant evidence for their portfolio. Work-based learning can indeed form the basis of any of the routes. Its chief characteristic is the submission of a portfolio of evidence for assessment to a regional PQ consortium for professional credits towards the AASW or separately to an educational institution towards academic credits for an academic award.

It is possible increasingly for work-based learning to be used to gain academic as well as professional awards. It is therefore important to check whether systems in place at local educational institutions can offer such provision to candidates. This would be helpful to individual candidates who wish to pursue an academic award alongside the advanced award. Many such universities limit AP(E)L claims to 50 per cent of their own academic award. Additional formal academic work will therefore have to be completed for an academic award.

APL and AP(E)L systems

The systems whereby educational institutions may give credit towards academic awards are known as the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (AP(E)L) or the Accreditation of Prior Certified Learning (APL). The processes for AP(E)L, APL, and work-based learning may be lengthy and demanding for candidates; it is essential that they are clear from the outset what evidence is required and what evidence is given guidance on how to present this in their portfolio. They both however provide a practical way of allowing experienced workers to gain formal recognition of their progress since qualifying. Some workers may as a result have the potential to enter academic programmes at a later point in addition to working towards the AASW. Likewise, work-based learning makes maximum use of the worker’s prior practice.

Figure 3 sets out the benefits of AP(E)L and work-based learning.

**Figure 3 Benefits of AP(E)L and Work-based Learning**

- credit achieved can be counted towards both professional and academic awards;
- the reflection on learning required by AP(E)L and work-based learning processes can improve candidate confidence and increase the skills of independent study;
- achieving credit for practice-based learning helps to develop the candidates’ personal value of themselves in their work situation;
- reflecting on an area of practice within the academic context aids theory/practice links.
For employers and managers:

- the recognition of the value of practice;
- an increased level of interest in aspects of practice on the part of their worker;
- candidates spend less time away from the workplace in pursuit of the development and recognition of their competence and learning needs;
- the learning is relevant to the workplace linked to occupational competences.

Accreditation Process

3.19 When an experienced worker approaches a regional PQ consortium, the candidate will be helped:

- to identify the specific learning outcomes to be approved for the purpose of credit rating;
- to present evidence in portfolio form.

Candidates should have provisional approval from the programme to pursue APEL claims prior to preparing or submitting any work.

Assessment is then by portfolio which:

- clearly states the learning outcomes claimed and describes how they were acquired, and
- provides supportive evidence that the learning claimed has taken place.

3.20 In agreeing specific learning outcomes candidates will have continued access to their local consortium via a mentor who can advise them on the construction of learning outcomes. Candidates should take as their benchmark the requirements for the AASW in para 4.4 of Paper 31 (CCETSW 1992) alongside the key tasks for forensic social work in the companion volume (CCETSW 1995a).

3.21 Evidence can be presented in portfolios in a variety of ways relevant to the task undertaken but should demonstrate:

- clarity of expression;
- in-depth knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- relevant referencing;
- critical analysis of issues with reference to own practice;
- originality.

3.22 A typical portfolio may include:

- the learning outcomes claimed;
- a focused piece of writing which puts the learning achieved into the context of advanced-level social work practice;
- an account of how the learning developed over time.
• documentary evidence of competence
• certificates or training programmes and analysis
• log-books
• reflective diaries
• reports produced
• surveys or research work carried out
• work plans
• case studies
• reports from managers, supervisors or feedback from colleagues, service users, etc.
• use of IT, interactive video, databases etc.
• video or audio tapes of work with critical analysis
• project work undertaken.

3.23 The consortium will provide a mentor and, where specific expertise is needed, a consultant. The mentor will be the main point of contact for candidates as they undertake their work towards the award and support candidates in their preparation for assessment. Mentors will have two years experience of working in their particular field at advanced level, provide evidence of skills in antiracist and anti-discriminatory practice and preferably have experience of acting as a consultant/mentor.

3.24 The possible routes described above mean that there will be a range of advice available to an individual. It is important to distinguish between guidance which is primarily supportive and that required by procedural arrangements.

(2) Local in-house staff development programmes

3.25 Local in-house staff development programmes developed on what may be an ad hoc basis by agencies, can contribute to the training and accreditation of advanced level competence for social workers working with mentally disordered offenders.

3.26 Provided such training is outcome-based and can support some form of assessment of these outcomes in terms of competence development then:
• staff can get recognition for the training they undertake;
• operational managers involved in the development of their staff group can help identify improved practice, skills and benefits to service users;
• trainers can help guide staff on the assessment processes involved in individual staff portfolios providing evidence of their competence and those makes the most of in-house provision.
3.27 Where agencies already have or plan to have individual staff reviews or development plans, training needs can be fed directly into the planning cycles of training sections. In-house training can be put forward to link in with a local programme. Consortia may recognize the expertise of in-house trainers and formally build in some units which are run by agencies and other parts of the programme run by consortia or educational establishments. The role of in-house training will depend on a variety of factors but agencies should be proactive in seeking recognition for their work while ensuring that CCETSW's minimum standards for practice are upheld.

3.28 Agencies, perhaps in conjunction with local educational institutions, have the opportunity to develop locally-based courses which extend beyond ad hoc in-house programmes in single agencies to involve collaboration with neighbouring agencies. Their common incentive would be promotion of training, staff development and accreditation of staff working with mentally disordered offenders. Use of the statements of competence in the companion volume (CCETSW 1995a) and the contents of this guidance would be essential in ensuring the relevance of this training to such staff. This kind of training could:

- offer particular modules rather than a full programme;
- be organized in-house or by training consortia or by educational institutions.

3.29 Training consortia could run their own local programmes which will have the benefit of being tailored to their own known audience. The programmes would also benefit from good knowledge of local resources and the ability to explore and access different work experiences for individual students according to their needs.

3.30 Opening up the programme as a combined AASW and MA course would encourage candidates to come forward from a range of professions which would obviously have benefits for exploring multi-agency and multi-disciplinary issues.

3.31 Training programmes which fulfill all the requirements of the AASW have the potential to become national.

3.32 A number of local consortia may not have the resources to run a full programme and others may wish to provide a range of learning opportunities in different agencies in their partnership to meet the training needs of their workforce and perhaps, join with in-house training programmes. This building-block approach (see Figure 4) should be undertaken using the statements of forensic social work competence. This model is not prescriptive, being merely a suggestion as to the sort of programme which could be put together. Elements of the programme could be provided by different agencies.

3.33 Social work agencies and probation service departments already providing training can apply for credit rating for their in-house courses or develop new courses as part of their own training and staff development plans. This reinforces CCETSW's philosophy of a continuum of training and development throughout a professional career.
**Figure 4: A building block approach to the development of local training provision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of a Unit Title</th>
<th>Mode of Learning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and Report Writing</td>
<td>Taught Unit</td>
<td>Part One of an in-house training programme (approved as a 20-credit package)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Planning and Management</td>
<td>Taught Unit</td>
<td>Part Two of an in-house training programme (see above)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Individuals and Families</td>
<td>Taught Unit</td>
<td>Advanced Unit taught at local university in a multi-disciplinary MA course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Crisis and Trauma</td>
<td>Taught Unit</td>
<td>Developed and run by local Special Hospital and credit-rated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertaking Social Supervision and Working with External Systems</td>
<td>Work-Based Unit</td>
<td>Learning outcomes agreed directly with RQ consortia - in-house short courses (no assessment) offers underpinning knowledge, utilising the social supervision framework to examine and work with external systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Professional Boundaries</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Part of an in-house management development programme oriented to this area of social work (project submitted to RQ consortia for credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative Portfolio</td>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>Negotiated directly with consortium with appointment of mentor from neighbouring agency, submission to consortium, including all general requirements of Advanced Award</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A National Programme

3.34 The existence of statements of competence for social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders (CCETSW 1995a) and the corresponding AASW (CCETSW 1992) open up the potential for educational institutions to consider the development of a national academically-based course. A national training programme based in a centre of excellence would seek to attract candidates from all over the UK and lead to a Master's degree. Potential programme providers would need to consider:

- location and timing of any teaching input
- how to attract students, marketing etc.
- how to involve agencies from outside the consortium in providing mentors, assessors etc.
- access to resources to support students
- costs of hiring nationally renowned experts to contribute to the programme
- developing distance learning and open learning packages
- differing legislative provision and service organization in Scotland and Northern Ireland
- providing Welsh language options, possibly through franchising agreements.

Advantages

3.35 Such a programme would:

- be prestigious
- have a wider audience than local courses
- increase viability, given the relatively small numbers UK-wide of workers in this field
- enable and encourage flexible learning
- act as a national network
- be an indicator of quality and a benchmark for local modules.

3.36 Teaching may be best concentrated in day release or a week-end school where several units are combined.

3.37 Work-based units could be provided with little difficulty by agency managers and opportunity for candidates to choose these options. The programme would have to ensure standards for work-based learning were rigorously met.

3.38 Reciprocal arrangements with other programmes and establishments for students to use library and other resources may need to be considered.
Flexible learning could be developed. However, open and distance learning packages are expensive to produce and there is a lack of good, dedicated training material available at present suitable for advanced level training. Hopefully the gaps in the market will be filled as work with mentally disordered offenders takes a higher profile and more people are involved in training activities. Current attention to risk assessment (especially by probation departments and DH) is to be welcomed.

The exemplar of a national programme in Appendix 1 has been tested via a credit rating process. The results of the exercise suggest that:

1. It is viable to have an advanced academic award in forensic social work
2. There is sufficient correlation between the AASW requirements in Paper 31 and the core competences for forensic social work
3. A concurrent Master's degree programme can be developed
4. The benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach are worth active consideration.

The descriptions of these routes have assumed that all forms of training must adequately and appropriately reflect the nature and requirement of effective multi-disciplinary and multi-agency work in order at least to correspond with the defined statements of competence.

Although the AASW is a qualification for social workers and probation officers, there is much to be gained in encouraging other professionals working with mentally disordered offenders to undertake training and study along with social workers and probation officers in this field.

The roles of different professionals overlap in many areas, and it is accepted that forensic social work draws on the knowledge and experience of other professionals. Forensic psychiatry, psychology, and nursing all have a valid contribution to make to the training of probation officers and social workers working with mentally disordered offenders. There may therefore be advantages when planning training to enable other professionals:

(a) To contribute through teaching, mentoring and the practice element of training, but perhaps also

(b) To undertake units of training alongside forensic social workers in order to provide discussion and sharing of knowledge and skills in the training setting.

As the training at advanced level equates with Master's degree level training, linking the AASW with a Master's degree programme may encourage professionals other than social workers and probation officers to undertake training in work with mentally disordered offenders.
Section 4: Case Examples

4.1 This section gives some hypothetical routes individuals might take to the AASW. Neither prescriptive nor exclusive, they are designed as practical examples of issues individuals will face in pursuing advanced awards. They seek to make the most of the flexibility of arrangements described in the preceding sections. Trainers and those managers advising their staff might find this section particularly useful.

4.2 It should be noted that candidates wishing to be considered for the AASW will be required to register with consortia and, in addition, must provide evidence of sufficient knowledge and experience in a particular area to:

(i) provide a foundation for the proposed programme of training;
(ii) demonstrate that they have the potential to undertake work at an advanced level.

Case Example 1: Jane

Jane is a team manager in a regional secure unit. She has 15 years experience in various jobs as a probation officer, social worker in the secure unit and for the last three years as manager of the social work team. She has undertaken a substantial amount of in-house training over the years and has accumulated a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the area of work with mentally disordered offenders. She has been instrumental in developing links with the local community and has a service development remit in her current job. She is interested in gaining the AASW and an MA and has chosen management as her focus for assessment.

Jane’s Aims

Jane is interested in gaining as much credit for her experience as possible. Under current CCETSW guidance she may be able to negotiate to claim up to 80 credits by APEL for the AASW but she needs guidance in ensuring that her claim is acceptable. She will need to map her claim against the requirements outlined in Section 2.

Outline of Jane’s Individual Pathway

After discussion with a training programme it is agreed that she can claim 60 credits towards both MA and AASW by APEL. She then chose to undertake two optional taught units which linked with the piece of work on service development she wanted to undertake for her dissertation which she chose to present for assessment in portfolio form rather than in the traditional manner.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Action/Plan</th>
<th>Advanced Award Competences</th>
<th>Key Tasks and Activities in Forensic Social Work (GCETSW Paper 31 (1992): para 4.24)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day One</strong></td>
<td><strong>Decision must be made which programme will offer maximum “credit” for APEL.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>In addition to performance evidence on the competences determine any supplementary evidence required for underpinning knowledge to be demonstrated.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 4 weeks</td>
<td><strong>Agree APEL learning outcomes and get guidance on pathway.</strong></td>
<td>(ii): (ii); (iii); (iv); (v); (vi); (vii); (viii); (ix); (x); (xi); (xii)</td>
<td>Activity 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6; 1.7; Key Task 1; Key Task 2; Key Task 3; Activity 4.2; 4.4; 5.5; 5.6; 6.4; Key Task 7; Activity 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; 8.5; 8.6; 8.7; 8.8; 8.9; 8.10; 8.11; 8.12; 8.13; 8.14; 8.15; 8.16; 8.17; 8.18; 8.19</td>
<td><strong>Tought Limit: Managing Crisis and Trauma and Working with Individuals and Families.</strong> <em>(Note that the candidate may revisit elements of competence presented firstly in APEL portfolio above).</em></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Prepare her portfolio for APEL and be assessed.</td>
<td>(iv): (v); (vi); (vii); (viii); (ix); (x); (xi); (xii)</td>
<td>Key Task 8; Activity 2; Activity 4.2; 4.4; 5.5; 5.6; 6.4; Key Task 7; Activity 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; 8.5; 8.6; 8.7; 8.8; 8.9; 8.10; 8.11; 8.12; 8.13; 8.14; 8.15; 8.16; 8.17; 8.18; 8.19</td>
<td><strong>Work: A creative project setting out the ways in which an interagency forum can be used to implement changes for work with mentally disordered offenders.</strong></td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 4 weeks</td>
<td>Assess, planning, putting plans into practice with clients.</td>
<td>(v): (vi); (vii); (viii); (ix); (x); (xi); (xii)</td>
<td>Activity 2; Activity 4.2; Activity 6.2; Activity 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; 8.5; 8.6; 8.7; 8.8; 8.9; 8.10; 8.11; 8.12; 8.13; 8.14; 8.15; 8.16; 8.17; 8.18; 8.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Submit portfolio for Assessment.</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>as above</td>
<td>The final piece of work must demonstrate overall coherence, i.e. summative statement on the integration, progression and coherence of the whole award.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-44 weeks</td>
<td>Gain AASW and MA.</td>
<td>Through relevant assessment board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Case Example 2: Sally

Sally is a social worker from a team in a Special Hospital with two years' experience in this area of work. She has had little formal training since qualifying other than approved social worker training four years ago. Sally wants to undertake the award and has her line manager's backing. She is also interested in gaining an MA qualification. She has chosen to follow practice as her focus for assessment for the award. In considering options, Sally will take into account the learning opportunities available, her personal circumstances, travel and her own learning style.

Sally's Options:

A discussion with the leader of a local programme 18 miles away which combined an MA with an AASW programme opened up the following options for Sally:

- APEL for 20 credits focusing on her current practice competence;
- A range of taught units according to her learning needs and interests;
- Given Sally's practice focus, work-based units were encouraged which carry 20 credits;
- To follow up her interest in working with women who self-harm in her dissertation.

Outline of Sally's Individual Pathway:

No in-house training was available at advanced level. As an experienced worker Sally could gain more credits through APEL. However, most MA programmes recommend that 50 per cent of the award would constitute a maximum APEL application. In this instance Sally was happy to go for 20 credits. The APEL system as outlined above proved helpful and Sally was helped to map out her proposed route to the award.
## Map of Sally’s individual pathway to the AASW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day one</strong></td>
<td>Decide which programme suits her needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 - 4 weeks</strong></td>
<td>Agree APEL learning outcomes and obtain guidance on pathway.</td>
<td>(v); (vili); (ix)</td>
<td>Drawn from Key Tasks 4; 5; 6 and 7</td>
<td>Next to check the maximum credit by APEL offered by choses Master's route usually 50 per cent of the award.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 months</strong></td>
<td>Prepare her portfolio for APEL and be assessed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Need at this point to check which of the elements had been documented.</td>
<td>The submission focused on her current practice competence.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 months</strong></td>
<td>Attend four taught core units and undertake assessment.</td>
<td>(i) a &amp; b; (iii); (iv)</td>
<td>Activity 1.2; 1.3; 1.5; 1.6; 2.4; 2.6; 2.7; 2.9; Key Task 3; Activity 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6; 4.7; 4.8; 4.9; 4.10; 4.11; 4.12; 4.13</td>
<td>Taught units cover learning outcomes.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 months</strong></td>
<td>Undertake work-based learning unit and assessment.</td>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>Activity 2.3; 2.4; 2.6; 2.8; 2.10; Key Task 8</td>
<td>Working on a project setting up an intervention programme utilizing a range of health and social work professionals.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9 months</strong></td>
<td>Undertake piece of work/project for dissertation and submit portfolio for assessment.</td>
<td>(vi); (vii); (ix); (x); (xii)</td>
<td>Activity 1.6; 2.6; 2.8; 2.10; 2.11; 3.1; 3.3; 3.7; Key Task 8</td>
<td>The final piece of work must demonstrate overall coherence; an summative statement on the integration, progression and coherence of life within awards.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 - 4 weeks</strong></td>
<td>Gain AASW and MA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Through relevant assessment boards.</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Note: The candidate may revisit elements of Activity 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6; 4.12; 5.5; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 7.1; 7.3; 7.4; 7.5; 7.6; 7.7; 8.8; 8.9; 8.10; 8.11; 8.12; 8.13.
Case Example 3: Paul

Paul works part-time in a court diversion scheme. He is an approved social worker and wants to gain the AASW and the MA but has family commitments which mean he can only fit in a limited amount of work towards the award. He has undertaken a diversion worker's course of training which is at Master's level for which he wants to gain credit. However, the course was primarily designed for health professionals, but there was a lot of overlap with the forensic social work competences set out in the CCETSW document. He has also undertaken a unit on a Master's level course in cognitive behavioural work with mentally disordered offenders for which he would like to be awarded credit. (He was unable to carry on with the rest of that course as he moved away from the area for personal reasons). He has chosen practice as his focus area for assessment.

Paul's options

Paul needs help to identify which of the learning objectives he can demonstrate competence in and how best to go about presenting evidence. He has registered for an in-house course in suicide risk assessment and wants to know if it will lead to more credits. The in-house trainers are keen to develop their profile of training in this area and get their courses credit-rated where appropriate.

Outline of Paul's individual pathway

Paul wanted to work at a slower pace towards gaining the awards and needed advice about when he should register and how the links with in-house training could be used. Within the local consortia training opportunities to cover all the forensic social work competences do not exist at present. Paul could, however, use the credits gained towards an award when full training opportunities have been developed.

More and more people like Paul will want to collect credits as they can and guidance about the route is needed to ensure the best use is made of training available. Guidance should be sought as early as possible in order to agree a coherent and progressive structure with the accrediting programme.

Map of Paul's individual pathway to the AASW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Activity Plan</th>
<th>Advanced Award</th>
<th>Key-Theme and Activities</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 - 3 weeks</td>
<td>Agree, APL from certificated learning</td>
<td>1.3.4.7.8.14.8.15</td>
<td>(iii) (iv) (v)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 2 - 4 weeks | Approaching PQ reporting, over advising on how to proceed | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Activity/Task Description</th>
<th>Activity/Unit References</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same period</td>
<td>Agree APL from certificated learning -2. (iv) 1.2; 1.3; 1.5; 1.6; 2.6; 2.7; 2.10; 3.2; 4.3; 4.5; 4.6; 4.12; 5.5; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 7.7  Accredited M level unit on Policy and Practice - Diversion.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Prepare portfolio for AP(E)L and be assessed. Elements of (vi); (viii) Activity 1.6; 1.7; 2.6; 2.7; 2.8; 2.9; 2.10; 2.11; 2.12; Key Task 3; Activity 5.5; 5.6; 6.4; 7.2; 7.5; 8.5; 8.7; 8.8; 8.9; 8.10; 8.13</td>
<td>Achieved through AP(E)L application. In-house training course on inter-agency aspects of work with MDOs provided underpinning knowledge.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of six month period</td>
<td>Discuss with PQ consortium possible routes to the award available locally. Need at this point to check which of the elements have been documented. Should have 30 credits at this point.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over next two years at convenience of candidate</td>
<td>Attend three taught core units and undertake assessment. (i) a; (vi); (ix) Activity 2.6; 2.8; 2.10; 2.11; 7.1; 7.3; 7.4; 7.5; 7.6; 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; 8.4; 8.5; 8.6; 8.9; 8.10; 8.12; 8.13</td>
<td>Taught units on Policy Development: Supervision and Consultation Skills (20 Credits) (Note that the candidate may revisit elements of competence presented firstly in AP(E)L above.)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 months</td>
<td>Undertake work-based unit and assessment (i); (ii) Activity 5.6; 7.1; Key Task 8</td>
<td>Working on an EC Project - setting up an international exchange programme developing innovative services and policy guidelines for his region.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Must be completed within five-year period</td>
<td>Undertake piece of work / project for dissertation and submit portfolio for assessment. (i) b; (v); (x) must be completed Key Task 1; Activity 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; 2.11; Key Task 4; Key Task 5; Activity 8.8; 8.9; 8.10; 8.11; 8.12; 8.13</td>
<td>The final piece of work must demonstrate overall coherence i.e. summative assessment on the integration, progression and coherence of the whole award.</td>
<td>40 =120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 4 weeks</td>
<td>Gain AASW and MA. Through relevant assessment boards.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alex is a senior probation officer currently working half-time in a training section. He was involved in producing his probation service’s protocol for working with mentally disordered offenders and his previous experience includes multi-agency work as a mental health social worker.

He would like to develop his interest in this area and has chosen education and training as his focused area for assessment.

**Alex’s Options**

He has chosen to take taught units to make up the first 80 credits and then to do a piece of work around forensic social work service development and training links for his dissertation. He has access to practice experience in the half-time that he is involved in service delivery but needs support from his manager to ensure that he gets appropriate learning opportunities. He is part of a staff development and review system requiring he and his manager to decide priority areas for professional development and they agree that this is appropriate which is helpful.

**Alex’s individual pathway**

- Decision to opt for a national training programme.
- Discussion to agree appropriate pathway.
- Undertake units of study and assessment.
- Agree learning outcomes for the piece of work/project to be basis for dissertation.
- Undertake work and assessment.

Gain AASW and MA.
Section 5: The CCETSW Framework for Continuing Professional Development

5.1 CCETSW has established a framework for continuing professional development for qualified social workers and probation officers. The detail of the framework is set out in Paper 31 (CCETSW 1992).

5.2 The aim of the framework is to support education, training and qualifications for social workers and probation officers that will ensure service users receive the highest possible standards of service.

5.3 There are six principal components to the framework for continuing professional development:

- two awards - the Post Qualifying Award in Social Work and the Advanced Award in Social Work built upon and reflecting two different levels of practice competence;
- a Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS) which will enable candidates to gain recognition for the wide range of competence they acquire at various stages of their career following qualification. CATS is also linked to academic awards;
- concentration on assessment of learning outcomes;
- implementation through collaborative arrangements between agencies and educational institutions operating as PQ consortia;
- a monitoring system;
- a UK-wide standard of education and training established and maintained by CCETSW.

The Advanced Award in Social Work (AASW)

5.4 The AASW is the final point of the training continuum set out in CCETSW Paper 31. To achieve the AASW candidates must gain 120 credits at advanced level which should be assessed at the minimum academic equivalent to Masters degree level. Credits can be gained in a variety of ways which can include credits for prior learning or experience.

5.5 To meet CCETSW's requirement that the work towards the award demonstrates a coherent, integrated and p-e approach candidates need to be given clear guidance before starting on a pathway to the award. The need to ensure that candidates are appropriately advised and supported is therefore crucial.
Candidates can choose a primary focus on one (or a combination) of the following work areas to be assessed in:

- practice
- education and training
- management
- research.

As the AASW is in its early development, the viability of choosing a particular pathway has yet to be fully tested. The requirements of the award as a whole mean that it is likely that all candidates would have to demonstrate some achievement in all four areas. Indeed one of the characteristics of full-time workers in the field of forensic social work is that they combine high-level practitioner skills in assessment and intervention, alongside management roles and the provision of training and consultation to other workers.

One way to gain the AASW would be by demonstrating that all the forensic social work competences (see Section 3) have been met. This is likely to be of particular interest to staff engaged full-time in forensic social work activities, e.g., staff working in secure settings. Candidates with a range of learning and practice experience and who are engaged in forensic social work as a proportion of their job (e.g., staff in field social work teams, probation officers) could gain the AASW by demonstrating competence across the broader range of their work activities provided that the other work also at an advanced level of competence.

**Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) Schemes**

Under Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) schemes, credits can be gained over a period of five years, which, providing they form a coherent, integrated, and progressive approach, can lead to an award. The schemes also allow individuals to gain credits from different consortia which, when transferred and combined, can lead to the award. Academic credits can be accumulated in the same way to lead to a Master's degree.

**Assessment**

To gain an AASW, candidates have to provide evidence that they have met all the requirements set out in Paper 31 (CCETSW 1992, para 4.4). Evidence required for the AASW in forensic social work includes competences relevant to that area of work. The companion volume (CCETSW 1995a) highlights assessment issues relevant to study at this level for workers in this field.

**Relationship between AASW and Academic Qualifications**

In accordance with good practice in adult learning, potential candidates need to be clear from the outset of the range of possible options so that they can choose the
route which best addresses their experience, circumstances and learning needs. Advice from PQ consortia will be crucial.

5.12 Education and training providers can enable candidates to take a variety of routes to gain either an AASW or a Master's or both. While there is no requirement to pursue an academic award concurrently, there can be advantages in doing so. The programme could be appropriate for a range of professionals allowing maximum scope for a multi-agency experience and maximum flexibility for candidates to tailor the learning opportunities to their individual needs including other professional awards e.g. in nursing.

5.13 Experienced social workers can register for the AASW and/or for an MA provided they meet the necessary selection requirements. This could include, but does not require, possession of the Post Qualifying Award in Social Work (PQSW). Evidence of ability to work at the required level either through previously documented qualifications or through submission of material would also be necessary.

Guidance on writing units for credit rating

5.14 Set out below are matters to be taken into consideration when developing a training programme and preparing it for credit rating by a PQ consortium. A unit specification needs to convey enough information to enable a decision to be made regarding credit-worthiness; but not so much that it becomes overwhelming. Guidance on preparing a unit specification is given in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Preparing a Unit Specification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>All units need a title which needs to convey the content succinctly. Check that there are no other units with the same name!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CREDIT POINTS</td>
<td>Units are usually either 10 or 20 credit points. The volume of credit is linked to the number of study hours (notional effort) and to the assessment of the unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL</td>
<td>This usually refers to the intellectual skills which a student following the course develops in order to achieve credit by completing the assessment successfully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOURS</td>
<td>These need to reflect the volume of credit. Generally 10 credit classroom-based half-units are based on 30 hours directed learning and 20 credit classroom-based units on 60 hours directed learning. It is always helpful to state the directed and student-directed hours separately on the unit specification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Directed learning does not necessarily mean contact.
| RATIONALE | This is a brief explanation providing relevant background to enable the reader to understand and put the unit into context. |
| LEARNING OUTCOMES | These are clear statements of what the student might expect to achieve by marketing the unit because employers may examine these. |
| PREREQUISITES | The skills and knowledge assumed in the design of the unit, and which students would need to complete the unit successfully. These may refer to those achieved in a particular unit within the route, programme, but remember that not all students will have followed the unit, so you may refer to these. |
| CO-REQUISITES | There may be units which a student must study in order to complete the unit. |
| CONTENT | Give a brief indicative here (about 4-5 lines). |
| TEACHING METHODS | Some indication of how it will be delivered, such as workshops, experimental sessions, lectures, etc. |
| ASSESSMENT | Brief but clear description of the mode of assessment for this unit with clear indication of formative and summative. |
Section 6: Available Training

6.1 When reviewing available training it became apparent that there was little specifically directed at gaining the AASW in forensic social work. There are several Masters' programmes in social work which may equip candidates with some or all of the credits needed. Programmes might find the mapping exercise (CCETSW 1995a) useful to identify the overlap between their course requirements and the AASW requirements.

6.2 Many of the short courses, conferences or seminars across the UK could provide some of the underpinning knowledge at advanced level or be linked with specific skill development. They have not been included here as most identified were one off events.

6.3 The information below is not an exhaustive list of everything available but gives an indication of some of the academic institutions offering programmes at advanced or certificated level.

Master's degree programmes:

6.4 Masters in Social Work programmes are provided at several universities which can accommodate candidates who wish to take a forensic option in the practice placement or research project. Other Masters' programmes are provided by psychology or psychiatry departments and are open to social workers and probation workers working with mentally disordered offenders, notably:

- University of Edinburgh (with Stirling University)
- Queens University, Belfast (with specialist optional units in alcohol problems)
- University of Ulster
- University of Southampton (specialist mental health route)
- University of Reading (full forensic option)
- the Tavistock Institute (with the University of London) (also provides a specialist unit in work with young mentally disordered offenders)
- University of Manchester (MSc in Psychiatric Social Work with forensic option)
- University of Birmingham (psychology department runs a Masters' course)
- University of Liverpool (a Masters' programme in Cognitive Behavioural Work with Mentally Disordered Offenders)
- University of Hertfordshire (offers a range of diploma courses and short courses)
- University of Leicester (MA in Criminology) - also provides Certificate courses in associated areas of work
• University of London (Institute of Psychiatry) - MSc. in Mental Health Social Work.

Other programmes

6.5 A range of certificated programmes in the Care and Management of Mentally Disordered Offenders are provided by Rampton and Ashworth Education Centres. Broadmoor Education Centre is developing a programme. The social work department at Broadmoor has provided courses including a social work supervisor's course.

Short courses, conferences and seminars

Short courses, conferences and seminars have been provided by:

- local probation departments
- local social services departments
- local training consortia
- local hospitals, regional secure units and special hospitals
- National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)
- The British Association of Social Workers (BASW)
- National Schizophrenia Fellowship
- MIND
- Richmond Fellowship

Training Materials

A search for good training materials revealed a distinct lack of appropriate resources at advanced level. Some programmes have devised their own materials for their own use but there remains an urgent need to develop open learning materials.

Some useful addresses

Women in Special Hospitals and Secure Psychiatric Units (WISH)
25 Horsell Road
London
N51XL
Tel. 0171 7006684

National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO)
169 Clapham Road,
London, SW9 OPH
Concord Videos
Felixstowe Road
Ipswich
IP 3PBJ

MIND (National Association of Mental Health)
Granta House
15-19 Broadway
Stratford
London E15 4BQ
Tel. 0181 5192122

National Association for Working with Sex Offenders (NOTA)
West Hill, Elstonwich, nr Hull
Humberside HU12 9BU

BASW Forensic Social Work Group also meet regularly and organize training events. Contact through BASW, 16 Kent Street, Birmingham B5 6RD Tel. 0131 6223911.
Appendix 1: An Exemplar of a National Programme

A1.1 This exemplar of a national programme was designed to test out the feasibility of:

- designing a programme for an advanced *academic* award in forensic social work
- to consider whether such a programme could fulfil all the requirements of an AASW
- to test the compatibility of the AASW with an MA programme.

A credit rating exercise was undertaken which concluded that the above three points were achievable. This programme is presented here in outline for *illustration purposes* only. Further work would need to be completed if the programme was to achieve formal credit rating.

**Aim**

A1.2 The programme aims to equip candidates with the knowledge, values and practice skills to operate at an advanced level in the complex and demanding field of work with mentally disordered offenders, recognizing that such practice has to be multi-agency and anti-oppressive.

**Learning Outcomes**

A1.3 To gain the AASW candidates will have to follow a pathway reflecting one of the following areas:

- practice
- education and training
- management
- research.

All candidates will have to demonstrate the following:

- their significant contribution to the development, delivery and evaluation of the service provided in a chosen area by demonstrating:
  (a) ability to analyse practices and policies which affect agencies and consumer groups, and
  (b) ability to research, plan, implement and evaluate strategies for improvement or change;
- review and critically evaluate the value base of their work in the light of continuing social and political change and demonstrate the ways in which these values are integrated and have been sustained in their work;
- over a significant period a high standard of antiracist and anti-discriminatory practice and be able to define and develop policies and practices which reflect these values;
• extensive and up-to-date knowledge of theoretical models, methods, policies and law, in their chosen area, including necessary knowledge of developments within the UK, and a capacity to evaluate critically their use;

• skilled use of a wide repertoire of models and ability to select and use the most effective approach to meeting consumer need for the different aspects of their work;

• skills in supervision and consultation;

• highly developed skills in communicating and working effectively and constructively with other professionals in other disciplines across organizational and service boundaries;

• ability to manage innovative and resourceful change in their chosen area, including the use of information technology wherever appropriate;

• ability to work independently, and be accountable, and make constructive and innovative use of consultation and management processes;

• reflective and analytical practice by showing, over an extended period, the ability to form clear judgements on their own and others' work, implementing, managing and evaluating any changes that are required;

• awareness of relevant policy, practice and institutions within the European or international context in order to evaluate their own work;

• clear leadership in their chosen field based on their extensive knowledge, high level of inter-personal skills, explicit values and acknowledgement of the responsibilities within their role.

Selection Criteria

A1.5 In order to register for the AASW in forensic social work programme candidates must:

• hold a CSS, CQSW or DipSW or their predecessor equivalents; or, in the case of workers trained abroad, a letter of comparability with the CQSW; or a letter of verification issued by CCETSW.

A1.6 All candidates must:

• provide evidence of sufficient knowledge and experience in work with mentally disordered offenders (definition: "mentally disordered" people who present, or are subject to significant risk and as a consequence are, or could be in contact with the criminal justice system"). This could be in a variety of settings which include court diversion, hospital or community settings, residential, training or research and should;

(1) provide a foundation for the proposed programme of training in the category chosen, and

(2) demonstrate that they have the potential to undertake work at this level and submit evidence of prior learning for which they are seeking credit;

• have paid any registration/assessment fees;
Selection will be by application form supported by line manager's or training officer's written report of endorsement both of which should show:

- evidence of relevant work experience
- ability to practise in an anti-oppressive manner
- availability to access appropriate practice experience.

The course leader will review applications and invite suitable candidates for interview by a panel who will ascertain whether they meet the selection criteria.

Normally candidates will have a first degree. In cases where they do not they must provide evidence of their ability to study at this level and provide academic references. The criteria for eligibility for the AASW is outlined in *The Accreditation Handbook* (CCETSW 1995b) and should be consistent with those requirements.

**Course Structure**

The course is structured to provide a flexible range of opportunities reflecting individuals' needs (see Figure 6).

The programme offers:

- three core units which must be completed
- a range of optional units
- work-based units which can be linked to one of the optional units
- independent study units which can be linked to one of the optional units
- a dissertation.

The core units and the optional units carry 10 credits.

The work-based and independent study units carry 20 credits.

The dissertation carries 40 credits.
Figure 6: Structure of the AASW

### CORE UNITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal aspects of criminology and psychiatry</th>
<th>Research methodology</th>
<th>Policy and practice with mentally disordered offenders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 credits</td>
<td>10 credits</td>
<td>10 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OPTIONAL UNITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suicide risk assessment and management</th>
<th>Risk assessment and management of dangerous behaviour</th>
<th>Psycho-social interventions-I planned work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 credits</td>
<td>10 credits</td>
<td>10 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psycho-social interventions-2 crisis work</th>
<th>Self-development in interagency work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Credits</td>
<td>10 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WORK-BASED UNITS and INDEPENDENT STUDY UNITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work-based unit - specifying learning outcomes drawn from the competences document</th>
<th>Independent study unit - specifying learning outcomes drawn from the competences document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 credits</td>
<td>20 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUMMATIVE PORTFOLIO

Candidates would be required to draw together their programme of learning to check on progress towards the award and to determine the precise focus of the dissertation.

### DISSERTATION

This could be completed either as a dissertation, thesis, particularly appropriate for those seeking the MA but not pursuing the AASW, or as a project/portfolio which as well as study in depth can demonstrate the coherent, integrated and progressive approach to the advanced award required by the regulations.

### ROUTES TO THE AWARD

Candidates can work out an individualised approach to the achievement of the award. The following must be borne in mind:

- the core units must be completed
- to gain the AASW all the competences must be demonstrated
- the overall programme must reflect coherence, integration and progression.
Core Units

A.12 The core units represent a basis for advanced level work with mentally disordered offenders and comprise:

(1) Legal aspects of criminology and psychiatry
(2) Mentally disordered offenders
(3) Research methodology.

Optional Units

A.13 Optional units include:

Taught Units

(1) Suicide risk assessment and management (see example in Figure 7)
(2) Risk assessment and management of ‘dangerous’ behaviour
(3) Psycho-social interventions 1 - planned work
(4) Psycho-social interventions 2 - crisis work
(5) Self-development in inter-agency work.

Work-based Units

Candidates can opt to gain credits for work-based learning provided:

• it is agreed at the interview as an appropriate method to determine the pathway the candidate will follow to the award;
• that the proposed learning action plan is acceptable;
• that the learning outcomes are linked to the professional development criteria as appropriate;
• that where the learning outcomes do not match an optional unit they are arranged into coherent learning components with key characteristics and then be awarded.

A.14 Advice is available to candidates to assist them to formulate their learning action plan which provides a formal application for permission to present a claim. This will be presented on a proposal form. The learning plan includes:

• An outline of the learning strategy
• A list of the learning outcomes claimed
• An indication of the evidence to be submitted
• An indication of the verifiers for each element of the evidence
• The level of the claim
• The amount of credit proposed.
Aim
This unit aims to equip the student with the knowledge and practice skills to assess and manage effectively the risk of suicide with mentally disordered offenders. Assessment tools and current research will be critically evaluated and intervention methods explored in theory and analysed in the work place.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the unit students will be competent to:
- gather data and information to identify and assess risk of suicide and self-harm;
- design care plans in line with risk assessment and individual needs;
- ensure appropriate resources are applied at the optimum time;
- select, apply and critically evaluate a wide range of treatments and other interventions available and demonstrate a high level of expertise in specific interventions;
- work in collaboration with users and carers;
- manage inter-agency negotiation and networking across professions and agencies;
- undertake, develop and utilize practice research and evaluation.

Indicative content
Critical evaluation and analysis of general risk factors in suicide assessment and specific factors for mentally disordered offenders; analytical study of suicide intent measures; critical reflection of gender, age and cultural issues; hopelessness; national and international research with individuals, groups and families including cognitive behavioural approaches; personal problem-solving techniques; and crisis, management, legal and ethical issues.

Learning and teaching methods
A variety of methods will be used including lectures, seminars, workshops, directed study and self-evaluation of practice in the work place. Students may also have tutorials and will have a mentor.

Assessment
Students will complete an assignment which demonstrates their competence in all of the learning outcomes. They may choose to present evidence to support their learning in a variety of ways which reflect their particular role and their primary focused area to be assessed in, i.e., practice, education and training, management, legal and ethical issues.

Indicative reading
Al.15. A contract is agreed between the candidate, their employer or supervisor and the relevant university tutor.

Al.16. The action plan will be reviewed to confirm that the learning outcomes are relevant to the programme, are at the appropriate level and are of appropriate size in terms of credits claimed.

Al.17. Once approval to proceed is given the route leader and candidate will be informed and details will be given of when the assignment should be handed in.

Independent Study Units (ISUs)

A1.18 This procedure encourages the proposal and undertaking of a package of work that can be accommodated within existing units of study or by APEL or work-based units. Candidates need to have their proposed learning outcomes and plan of work approved which should set out clearly:

• the anticipated learning outcomes; and
• method and mode of assessment.

A1.19 Help will be given to the candidate to formulate a proposal consistent with the general aims of the award on an ISU proposal form. The proposal should include:

• an outline of the proposal
• a list of outcomes claimed
• an indication of the evidence which will be submitted
• the level of the claim
• the amount of credit proposed.

The form should be signed by the candidate, designated supervisor, workplace supervisor (if applicable), route leader and subject leader. A nominated supervisor will be appointed with a specific remit in relation to the student as outlined in the full guidelines.

Summative Portfolio

A1.20 After completion of 80 credits and before embarking on the dissertation phase below, a summative portfolio is required. If the candidate has followed an approved route outlined above this may merely be a record of achievement while on the programme. However, if the candidate has pursued her/his own interests, has only undertaken part of the programme and has AP(E)L claims this will be an opportunity to reflect on progress and ensure that the relevant competences have been met. Whatever the route to this point the piece of work will help direct the dissertation phase and ensure that the candidate is on course for the AASW and/or the MA.
A dissertation is an original piece of work agreed in advance based on learning outcomes from the programme to meet the individual candidate's requirements and showing integration of previous learning, research and practice issues. The process is similar to the one outlined for work-based learning and a contract is drawn up. Assessment is by portfolio or traditional 20,000-word thesis according to the route taken.

Assessment Process

A1.22 Students will be assessed under university regulations against the learning outcomes identified for each module, work-based or independent study unit.

A1.23 To pass, students will have to provide evidence for all learning outcomes associated with each unit subject to the following procedure:

- evidence will normally be presented in portfolio form
- reports from line-managers, in-house trainers, or others acting as supervisors, mentors or consultants will be subject to independent verification by the assessment panel. These reports will normally constitute part of the portfolio.
- all portfolios will be available to the external assessors for the purpose of moderating standards between portfolios.

A1.24 Guidance on production of portfolios is available to each student with examples of appropriate work for inclusion.

Assessment Board

A1.25 The assessment board have formally delegated powers in relation to the assessment of candidates' work. Membership will include agency and academic staff who have expertise relevant to the assessment task and two external assessors approved and paid for by CCETSW.

A1.26 Remit of the assessment board is:

- to take overall responsibility for all formal assessment of candidates
- to ensure that the necessary expertise is available to make judgements on the portfolios
- to determine whether the portfolios submitted by the candidates satisfy the standard laid down by CCETSW
- to ensure that all relevant evidence and circumstances affecting individual candidates are available and taken into consideration in making a decision
Appendix 2: Key Reports, Guidance and Legislation

Review of Health and Social Services for Mentally Disordered Offenders and Others Requiring Similar Services - Chaired by Dr John Reed

A2.1 In five volumes, The Reed Report is a major piece of work which will inform the way the services are delivered to mentally disordered offenders for the foreseeable future. This comprehensive piece of work is to be welcomed as it contains principles for care, recommendations for the development of this area of work and guiding principles for practice.

Health of the Nation: Key Area Handbook: Mental Illness (1993) Department of Health

A2.2 The Health of the Nation identified mentally disordered offenders as a priority area for development. It highlighted the need for close cooperation between health, personal social services and criminal justice agencies, the importance of effective diversion schemes, and the need for strategic planning for this area of work to continue to develop.

National Health Service Planning and Priorities Guidance for 1994/95(EL(94)S4)B

A2.3 This guidance identified mentally disordered offenders as "a first order priority" and emphasized the need for a multi-agency approach to developing strategic and purchasing plans for health and social services. Discussion centered around the need to plan, resource and deliver jointly, community provision to mentally disordered offenders and to involve the independent sector. Again it reiterates the Reed Report's view that services ought to be developed for medium-term security and that a range of provisions including community-based provisions were essential to meet the needs of mentally disordered offenders and to ensure their rehabilitation.

The Care Programme Approach (HC(90)23) 6

A2A This Department of Health circular emphasized that all patients referred to specialist mental health services must have a written and agreed care plan involving all agencies and a key worker system in which a professional was responsible for ensuring the implementation of the care plan. The Reed report had proposed extending the care programme approach to involve those mentally disordered offenders being discharged from prison, special hospitals and secure units.
This outlined procedures for thorough multi-disciplinary assessment of risk for mentally disordered offenders who were likely to be returning to the community. It called for active risk assessment both at the time of discharge and during follow-up in the community of those people deemed to have a potential for dangerous or risk taking behaviour. The importance of multi-agency, multi-disciplinary working and risk assessment and management including the risk of suicide were highlighted.

Under this guidance all district health authorities are required to set up registers of patients who are at risk of harming themselves or others or of serious self neglect. This system is linked in with the care programme approach and again all patients should have an agreed care plan and a key worker.

This report raised many issues for services including the need for clear communication between agencies regarding care planning and risk assessment.

This report highlighted many issues regarding the care of special hospital patients and made far reaching recommendations for quality of services.

Other significant reports and papers include:

- Report of the working Group on High Security and Related Psychiatry (1994) Chair Dr. John Reed, Dept. of Health
- Report of the Enquiry into the Circumstances Leading to the Death of Jonathon Newby (July 1995) Chair Nicola Davies QC
- Mental Health Patients in the Community Bill

A range of other reviews and reports have been commissioned in this area over the last few years. Some of these are included in the bibliography section on Policy and Practice Guidance.
Related legislation

Mental Health Act (England and Wales) 1983, Mental Health (Scotland) Act 1984, Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Act 1961 and Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 with their associated Codes of Practice

A2.11 The Mental Health Acts set out provision for treatment of those with mental health problems at all stages in the criminal justice system.

A2.12 Other pieces of legislation also apply, notably the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and the Criminal Procedure (Insanity and Unfitness to Plead) Act 1991.
Appendix 3: Equal Opportunities Policy Statements

1. Introduction

CCETSW has two Equal Opportunities Policy Statements to guide its work: one relates to CCETSW's work in the field of education and training; one to CCETSW's role as an employer. It also operates within a Welsh Language Policy approved in 1989, and amended in November 1993.

2. Education and Training

In May 1995, Council approved the following policy statement for general use and in connection with all matters related to the entire continuum of qualifications.

"CCETSW promotes education and training that produces competent social care and social work staff who can provide high quality services in our diverse society. CCETSW recognizes that equal opportunity is something each individual wants for themselves and to which they have a legal right.

Students and candidates therefore will:

- accept and respect individual rights and circumstances and understand how these affect the delivery of services for children and adults, families and communities;
- learn how to counter unfair discrimination, racism, poverty, disadvantage and injustice in ways appropriate to their situation and their role.

Providers of social care and social work education and training and assessment centres will:

- eliminate unfair discrimination and disadvantage in all aspects of their work regulated by the Council;
- demonstrate this consistently through the quality assurance process.

CCETSW will:

take action through the quality assurance process to ensure the implementation of Council policies.

Council also approved the following continuation of the statement for use in connection with the DipSW, Post Qualifying and Advanced Awards in Social Work.

"This means that in setting standards for education, training and assessment for the Diploma in Social Work, Post Qualifying and Advanced Awards in Social Work, CCETSW requires that:
students qualifying with the Award will:

- have knowledge and understanding of the diversity of individual lifestyles and communities in the UK, of the significance of poverty, racism, ill health and disability, and of gender, social class and sexuality;
- have learning and practice experience in delivering social work services to children and adults, families and communities in ways which are responsive to and respectful of different faiths and cultural traditions, neither compounding disadvantage arising from race and social class, nor stigmatizing people by reason of age, disability, illness, poverty or other differences.

programme providers will:

- ensure that candidates have the knowledge and skills to counter unfair discrimination, racism, disadvantage and injustice in ways appropriate to their work with children, adults, families and communities, applied to the roles and context in which they are working;
- eliminate unfair discrimination and disadvantage in all aspects of their work which is regulated by the Council.

CCETSW will:

- monitor the Diploma in Social Work and Post Qualifying and Advanced Awards in Social Work through the quality assurance system and will take action to ensure that the policy is implemented.

Approved by Council, 25 May 1995

3. CCETSW as an employer

At its meeting on 28 July 1995, Council approved the following policy statement:

"As an employer, CCETSW will eliminate any unfair discrimination from all its employment policies and practices and will promote equality of opportunity by setting standards, defining responsibilities, stating intended outcomes and monitoring achievements."

4. Welsh language

Council's policy on the Welsh Language was amended in November 1993 to read as follows:

"CCETSW's role as defined by the HASSASSA Act 1983, and subsequently modified by Statutory Instrument, is "to promote training in social work"."

The Council, with the support of the Government, defines social work very broadly to include all social work and care staff throughout the personal social services.

In relation to its work in Wales, CCETSW accepts that users of social work services in Wales have a right to receive services in the Welsh Language. Consequently, there
is a need to ensure that there are social workers and care workers who can provide a professional service through the medium of Welsh in all parts of Wales.

CCETSW is therefore committed to:

(i) developing Welsh medium education and training throughout the continuum;

(ii) seeking to ensure that social work education and training in both English and Welsh is sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences so as to ensure an appropriately trained workforce for Wales;

(iii) seeking to ensure that all of the Council’s work in Wales is undertaken in ways which take full account of the Welsh language.
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To help improve services for mentally disordered offenders, the Department of Health in October 1994 commissioned CCETSW to produce guidance on post qualifying training in forensic social work. The term is increasingly being used to describe the same tasks performed by social workers and probation officers working with mentally disordered offenders in a range of settings including local authority social services, the health service, regional secure units and special hospitals.

A statement of competences identifying eight key tasks required for this developing field of social work was set out in *Forensic Social Work: Competence and Workforce Data* published in February 1995. The staff development and training required to achieve these competences are detailed in this complementary volume *Achieving Competence in Forensic Social Work*. Recognizing that forensic social work demands a high level of complex skills and knowledge, this guidance shows that candidates can achieve the competence required by meeting the requirements for CCETSW's Advanced Award in Social Work (AASW).

Central to the guidance is a section which links the statements of competence from the February document to CCETSW's specific requirements for the AASW. No set syllabus is prescribed. Nor are candidates directed to off-the-shelf courses. Instead, flexibility is emphasized through a wide range of training, staff development and accreditation routes reinforced by case examples of routes typical social workers and probation officers might take to the AASW. At the same time the guidance is located in CCETSW's post qualifying education and training framework which offers employers and employees a structure of professional staff development linked to a UK standard.

Information on training courses available and other resources is included together with the details of a possible national training programme and list of key reports, guidance and legislation setting the context to training and practice. An extensive bibliography classified by relevant subject areas is provided.

*Achieving Competence in Forensic Social Work* together with its companion volume offer a coherent and comprehensive resource for enhancing social work with mentally disordered offenders against a UK-wide standard of practice in any setting.

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