

The British Psychological Society

Promoting excellence in psychology

Standards for psychological service policies and arrangements for supervision of the probationary period for educational psychologists in Scotland (Stage 2)

September 2013



The British
Psychological Society
Partnership & Accreditation

www.bps.org.uk/partnership

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If you have problems reading this handbook and would like it in a different format, please contact us with your specific requirements.

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Introduction

Since 1993 the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology Training Committee (SDEPTC) has taken on the role of monitoring psychological service policies and arrangements for supervising probationer educational psychologists in Scotland.

In 2008, following discussions within the Training Committee about taking forward quality assurance aspects of the probationary period and its outcomes and consultation with the profession, the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2) was set up. It was ratified by the British Psychological Society as being necessary to fulfil the requirements for Chartered membership of the Society and full membership of the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology. The Qualification is granted to the individual once they are deemed to have fulfilled the requirements of the probationary period. As such it clarifies parameters and expectations for the probationary period, based upon previous policy documentation.

In June 2009 the Health and Care Professions Council ruled that the threshold entry level to the register for educational psychology throughout the UK would be at 'Doctoral' level or equivalent. The Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2) is viewed by the Society as 'Doctoral' level equivalent and the combination of the accredited MSc and the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2) meet the HCPC's Standards of Proficiency for Educational Psychology. In this way probationers completing an MSc from one of the two universities within Scotland accredited by the British Psychological Society must:

- be employed within a local authority Educational Psychology Service in Scotland that has an accredited policy for the induction of probationers and have their probationary period overseen by a Chartered Psychologist and full member of the SDEP, who is also registered with the Health and Care Professions Council as an Educational Psychologist;
- use the title *Educational Psychologist (Probationer)*; and
- successfully complete the Society's Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2), in order to be eligible to apply to register with the Health and Care Professions Council as an 'Educational Psychologist' and use that title.

Further details of the Society's Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2) can be found on the Society's website. All individuals involved in a probationary period should familiarise themselves with the requirements of the Qualification. Services should also provide new entrants with explicit information and guidance to enable them to make informed decisions about their probationary period within that service.

This handbook outlines the standards for psychological service policies and arrangements for supervising probationer educational psychologists in Scotland, leading to stage two of their qualification. The handbook lays out the minimum requirements, which would be expected of a service for it to be accredited in this way. It details the standards for probationary supervision and practice necessary for the probationer to achieve the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2) and eligibility for Chartered membership of the Society and the Division, and eligibility to apply to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) for registration as an educational psychologist.

Our standards



Our standards for the probationary period

1. The psychological service should have a written policy available which describes the principles upon which the probationary period is founded. This should be made available to probationers at the start of their induction.
2. For graduates of a two-year Scottish MSc course (which formally ends on August 31st in the 2nd year), a full twelve months (full-time) of further supervised practice is required. For those who are employed on a part-time basis the probationary period should be extended on a pro-rata basis. Graduates who have completed a three-year doctoral educational psychology training course do not require a period of probation but the service may wish to use relevant parts of the policy in order to plan their induction and reflect their need to become familiar with the Scottish context.
3. The policy should clarify that the probationer should identify themselves as such and use the title *Educational Psychologist (Probationer)*.
4. The principles upon which the probationary period is founded should relate to a systematic process, which involves a plan tailored to the needs of the individual, and service and authority requirements. The process should consider both breadth and depth of access to the range of educational psychologists' practice, in particular the five core functions: consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research. These functions should be carried out across the differing levels of intervention: individual, school and local authority. The continued development of practitioner inter-personal skills should be included. Further guidance is contained within the *Candidate Handbook for the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2)* and of course consideration should also be given to any statutory developments.
5. The policy should include a statement of aims and objectives for the provision of the probationary period.
6. The policy should recognise the clear end-point of the process for the purposes of moving to independent professional status, as specified in the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2).
7. The policy should make clear that it will support the probationer in registering for and completing the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2). All probationers will need to follow the guidelines set out in the *Candidate Handbook for the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (Stage 2)* and all of the documentation contained therein. Details of the assessment and enrolment process should be included in the service policy for probationers.
8. The service member in overall charge of overseeing the probationary arrangements from within the management team of the service (Co-ordinating Supervisor) should be: a Chartered Psychologist and full member of the SDEP or DECP; and registered with the Health and Care Professions Council as an Educational Psychologist. He/she (the 'Co-ordinating Supervisor') can appoint a work place supervisor with the appropriate skills and identify other appropriate sources of support as outlined in the Candidate Handbook. The Co-ordinating Supervisor should also have undertaken the Qualification's Approved Supervisor Training and also be entered on to the Register of Applied Psychologist Practice Supervisors (RAPPS).

9. The Co-ordinating Supervisor is responsible for organising the experience and in turn, can identify named sources (both management and non-management) of supervision and possible support.
10. The policy should include an outline of the plans for supervision and should specify clearly how the supervisor relates to the overall structure of psychological service management.
11. Supervision should be planned according to need, but the pattern of consultation should be regular and specified; probationers should normally have at least one hour of formal supervision per week, in accordance with the requirements outlined in the *Candidate Handbook*. Participants should have clearly identified written responsibilities. This may take the form of a written agreement between the parties concerned.
12. The Co-ordinating Supervisor, any additional supervisor (if appointed) and probationer should meet at least every three months throughout the course of the period to review and consider progress in relation to the Qualification.
13. Arrangements should be included to cover the scenario where a supervisor may have a prolonged period of absence.
14. Arrangements should be made for the probationer to be able to attend meetings of the Probationers' Network and to provide feedback to the service from that forum.
15. When planning the period account should be taken of probationers' previous training and practice experience, items such as the Skills Checklist, which graduates bring at present from the MSc courses at Strathclyde and Dundee Universities can be utilised.
16. The probationer may arrive with new skills that are of considerable value to the service. Practical steps to enable the service to benefit or learn from these should be included in the overall plan.
17. Supervisors should ensure that probationers are aware of their responsibilities under the British Psychological Society's *Code of Ethics and Conduct* and HCPC's *Standards of Conduct* and any local agreements.
18. The supervisor is required to ensure that probationers are aware of their responsibilities with regard to regulations, policy and practice in the areas of:
 - Health and Safety
 - Child Protection
 - Disability and Equality
 - Relevant education and child legislation
 - Local authority and service policy
 - Informed consent (see paragraph 23)
19. The policy should specify a protected reduction in workload for the period of probation. Usually this is the equivalent of a minimum of a 20 per cent reduction. It may also specify an initial period when the probationer will be without an allocated caseload and can include a separate element of protected time for the supervisor.
20. The probationary period might be considered to comprise an 'induction' component and a 'professional practice development' component. 'Induction' refers to planned introduction and access to the people, policies, practices and provision within both the psychological service and the local authority.

21. Probationers should be given an Inductee's Information Pack (regularly updated) containing information relating to the service and the Council, including such information as practice guidelines, policies and protocols, culture and ethos, contact details etc.
22. 'Professional practice development' refers to knowledge and skills relevant to immediate professional practice. Some of this might be delivered through joint work or apprenticeship opportunities. There is also scope for tutorial methods, guided reading and consultation. A small research project on a locally relevant aspect of practice or provision can be a useful vehicle for a new entrant and of value to the service.
23. Within supervision probationers may wish to utilise audio or video recordings of their work as a means of reflecting on their professional practice development, or as a part of their work towards demonstrating competence in the five core functions specified in paragraph 4. The service policy should therefore include provision for gaining informed consent from both probationers and service users for their participation in learning approaches of this kind. Supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that consent has been obtained for any recordings made.
24. The policy should specify the mechanisms within service and beyond for dealing with difficulties experienced by the probationer or the service during the probationary period.
25. There should be a clear plan for explicit evaluation of the induction programme with the probationer and a mechanism for reviewing the policy.

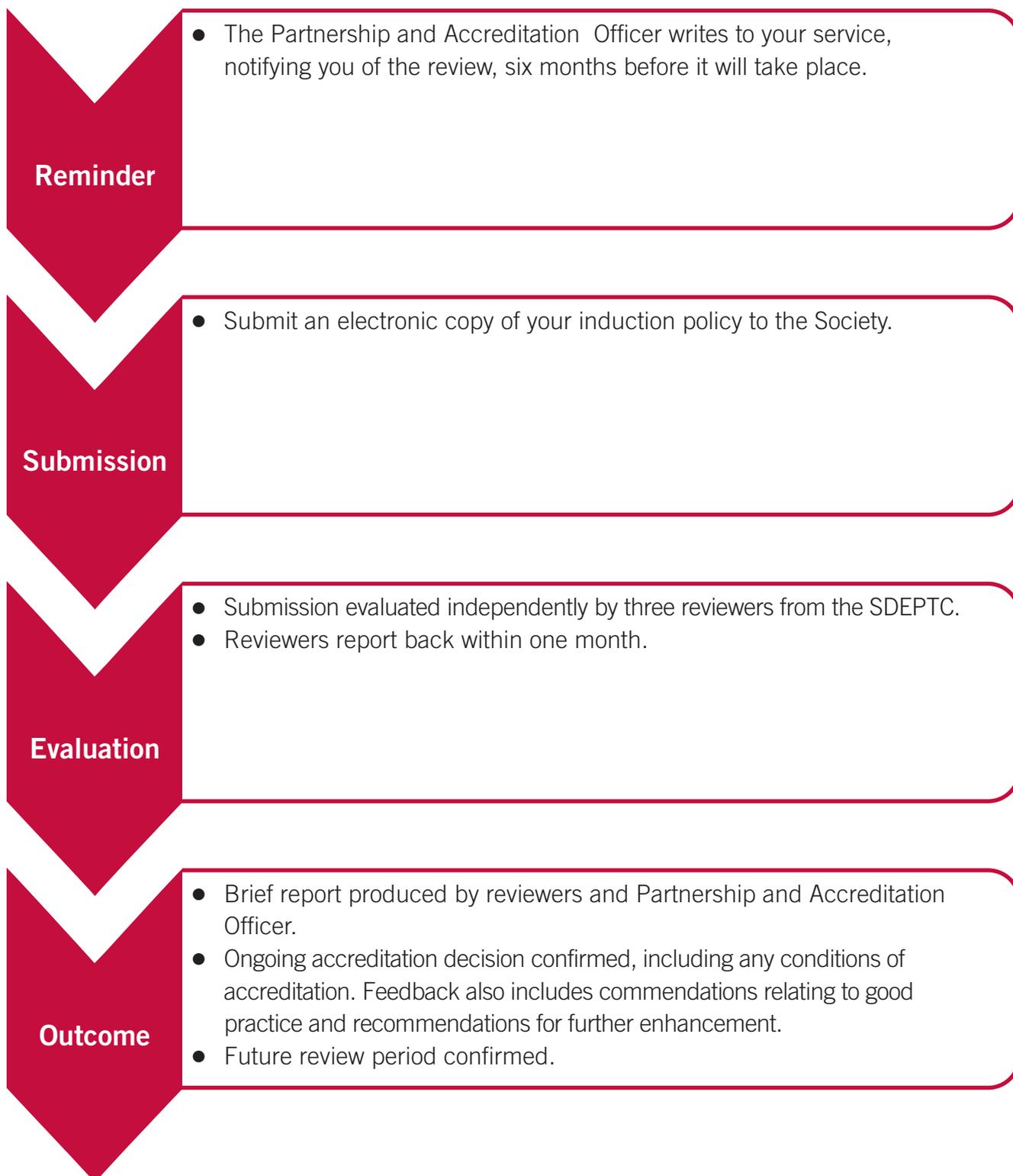
Our processes



Our processes

Once agreed the accreditation is awarded on an open-ended basis and is subject to ongoing review; normally every six years. It should be noted that accreditation may be withdrawn if a service does not submit their induction policy for review and this affects future probationers. The SDEPTC endeavours to keep communicating with any Psychological Service which is not accredited. However, services should be aware that the list of accredited services is kept up to date, and is made available both to ASPEP and to trainees as they come towards the end of their course.

Where there are significant policy changes these should be submitted to the Training Committee for review at this stage. The review process is as follows:



Documentation



Documentation

- For your review you will be asked to submit an up to date induction policy for the supervision of probationer psychologists. In practice, where a service has been updating its procedures and policies routinely, this is not an onerous task. Most services have a range of documentation (e.g. service handbook, service plan, quality audit, arrangements for continuing professional development and staff review - to name but a few). The arrangements for the supervision of a probationary period within a service are often dovetailed with other service procedures and documents. For the purpose of our reviews, it is not a requirement for the reviewers to receive all the associated relevant documentation. A list of what exists; together with copies of contents pages is sufficient.
- Our standards outlined above refer to the essential elements to be included in a service induction policy document for constructing and supervising a relevant probationary period. It is this policy document, which will be scrutinised by the reviewers. This is an essential document both for a new entrant to a service and for any new supervisor. The process for reviewing the service induction policy is a transparent process. All we ask is, do the arrangements as laid out cover the standards listed? It is, therefore, recommended that the standards (i.e. this handbook) be appended to the service policy.

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