

# Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) for social workers in Adult Social Care

Programme Handbook 2022–24



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# 1. Introduction and background

The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) for newly qualified social workers was one of 15 recommendations made by the Social Work Task Force in its 2009 report 'Building a safe, confident future'. The Social Work Reform Board agreed that the ASYE should take the place of former arrangements for newly qualified social workers from September 2012. Many aspects of the ASYE build upon former Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) programmes established by employers for social workers in the fields of both Children and Families, and Adults. Some features of the ASYE will differ across agencies.

The ASYE is assessed against the Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) (also known as post-qualifying standards or PQS) for social workers in Adult Services, and the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) for social work at ASYE level. The link below provides an overview of the ASYE for Adult Services and resources for NQSWs and ASYE assessors:

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Regulated-professions/Social-work/ASYE/ASYE.aspx>

Information on the Professional Capabilities Framework for social work at ASYE level can be found at:

<https://www.manchesterapp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/pcf-asye-level-compressed.pdf>

Information on the KSS for adults can be found at:

<https://www.manchesterapp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/KSS-for-Adults.pdf>

Candidates will be expected to complete their ASYE a year from the point of commencement.

## 2. Outline timetable for the ASYE in Adult Services

<p><b>Before starting the ASYE</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The NQSW starts in post, their Team Manager informs the ASYE co-ordinator, and the NQSW is assigned an ASYE assessor by the ASYE co-ordinator.</li> <li>2. The ASYE co-ordinator provides the NQSW and assessor with an ASYE handbook and any other necessary forms and information.</li> <li>3. The NQSW completes the forms and returns to the ASYE co-ordinator within three weeks of starting in the social worker post.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Part 1: Beginning the ASYE</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. For the NQSW – Identification of learning and development needs to inform the support and assessment agreement meeting, prompt thinking about the assessment process in the year ahead, and the initial professional development plan (PDP).</li> <li>5. For the assessor – Setting out, agreeing and completing the support and assessment agreement with the NQSW (including roles and responsibilities). This discussion will be prompted by the NQSW's reflections on their learning and development needs, prompting and enabling the NQSW to reflect on the year ahead, in particular their PDPs.</li> </ol>

<b>Part 2: First three months – foundational review</b>	6. For the NQSW – Development of critically reflective practice, identification of progress and continuing development needs, planning for the three-month foundational review. Submission of work product(s) to ASYE assessor.
	7. For the assessor – Review of support and progress with reference to the NQSW’s critical reflection within the practice evidence and work products submitted.
<b>Part 3: Three to six months – interim review and assessment</b>	8. For the NQSW – Progressive development of critically reflective practice, completing the critical reflection log and planning for the six-month interim review and assessment.
	9. For the assessor – Review of support and progress with reference to the NQSW’s critical reflection log and other evidence submitted, undertaking interim assessment. Assessor to invite any relevant others to the interim review meeting, eg. line manager if they are not also the assessor.
<b>Part 4: Nine months – progressive development meeting</b>	10. For the NQSW – Prepare for the nine-month progressive development meeting and complete meeting template with the assessor. Submission of work product(s) to ASYE assessor.
	11. For the assessor – Prepare for the nine months progressive development meeting and complete meeting template with NQSW. Assessor to invite any relevant others to the progressive development meeting, eg. line manager if they are not also the assessor.

<b>Part 5: Six to twelve months – final review and assessment</b>	<p>12. For the NQSW – Working towards the end of the ASYE, including consolidation of learning, recording in the critical reflection log, and planning for continued professional development post-ASYE. Submission of work product(s) to ASYE assessor.</p>
	<p>13. For the assessor – Final review of support and progress with reference to the NQSW's critical written reflection log or presentation, and other evidence submitted; final assessment leading to recommendation of outcome decision. Assessor to invite any relevant others to the final review meeting, eg. line manager if they are not also the assessor.</p>

Further details and all templates required can be accessed and downloaded at:

[ASYE \(Skills for Care\) portfolio templates, Sept 22](#)

## Submission of portfolio

The NQSW should submit their complete portfolio via email to the SWC/ASYE co-ordinator for presentation to the internal panel. The panel will moderate the portfolio and inform the NQSW and assessor of the outcome. If there are any queries, or further information is required by the panel, the ASYE co-ordinator will contact the NQSW directly to request this. Upon successful completion, the NQSW will receive a certificate from Skills for Care, and HR will be informed, enabling the social worker to progress upwards from the bottom of grade 7.

### 3. Support for NQSWs undertaking the ASYE

NQSWs undertaking the ASYE within Manchester Adult Social Care will be supported by the following people:

#### **Line manager/Supervisor**

Each NQSW will have a line manager/supervisor who will have overall responsibility for the induction, work allocation and supervision. This person may also undertake the role of ASYE assessor, but in some circumstances the assessor may be a senior social worker, team manager or experienced social worker from elsewhere in the department.

Where the NQSW's line manager is not their ASYE assessor, the line manager should be invited to the 6, 9 and 12-month reviews. If they are unable to attend, they should provide the assessor with a summary of progress/areas for development/any concerns before the review. Every effort should be made by the line manager and assessor to communicate regularly on the NQSW's progress.

#### **Assessor**

The assessor must be a qualified and Social Work England (SWE)-registered social worker. The assessor will provide frequent reflective supervision, support the NQSW through their ASYE, complete the necessary parts of the portfolio, and ultimately assess whether the NQSW has achieved the required standard to pass the ASYE. Where there are any concerns about the progress of the NQSW, the ASYE assessor should be informed as soon as possible.

Over the course of the year, the assessor is entitled to three 'ASYE days' to prioritise ASYE work for completion of portfolio items.

## **ASYE co-ordinator**

This role will be undertaken by a Social Work Consultant and it will be their responsibility to register the NQSW with the appropriate body (Skills for Care), oversee the programme, and support the NQSW and assessor as required. Social Work Consultants are always willing to attend reviews upon request and will presume the ASYE is progressing as planned, unless they are informed otherwise.

## 4. Documenting the ASYE: the portfolio

There are a number of elements that make up the completed portfolio. Responsibility for the overview of the whole assessment process and completion of the final report lies with the assessor. Responsibility for complying with the assessment process and completion of the portfolio lies with the NQSW.

Each template required for the portfolio has guidance included within it. Please see Skills for Care website for further information.

## 5. Supervision and workload management

### Regular good-quality reflective supervision

The suggested frequency of supervision during the ASYE is once a week for the first six weeks, once a fortnight for the next 20 weeks, and at least monthly thereafter. This should include time for the NQSW to reflect on their work, its effect upon them and their development needs, in an open and supportive way. Stated frequency is as per ASYE programme recommendations. Frequency will be flexible dependent on employment circumstances of the NQSW. For example, an NQSW who has been employed as a social worker elsewhere for eight months will not be expected to revert back to weekly supervision on beginning their employment with Manchester City Council. However, they will be expected to revert to at least fortnightly supervision sessions for the first six months once enrolled on the ASYE programme.

The ASYE supervision template can be found here:

<https://www.manchesterapp.co.uk/app-policies/>

### Workload management

The NQSW's workload should be managed and balanced. It should be protected in order to enable the NQSW to spend time in ASYE developmental activities. 10% of the NQSW's time should be ring-fenced for development activities and collating their evidence for their portfolio. Development activities include e-learning, attendance on training, webinars, conferences or events, shadowing colleagues, undertaking new tasks, visits to other organisations, researching, and becoming familiar with policies and procedures. These activities will take place during the working day and will be separate from study leave.

The NQSW should be assigned work at a level of complexity and risk that fits their experience to date. As a guide, the NQSW should not be given more than 90% of the work that a confident second or third-year social worker would undertake. The assessor should complete a caseload weighting exercise at three and nine months. If the caseload is markedly higher than the recommended level, this will be escalated to an ASYE co-ordinator and beyond. A protected caseload will allow the NQSW and their assessor to enjoy the experience and grow and gain from it as much as possible.

The caseload weighting tool can be found here:

<https://www.manchesterapp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Case-Load-Weighting-v2.xlsx>

## 6. Assessment process

At the end of the ASYE, the assessor will make a professional recommendation about the final assessment decision, ie. pass or fail. To pass, the NQSW will need to demonstrate their capability against the KSS and the ASYE-level PCF domains. The final portfolio will be checked by the ASYE co-ordinator and moderated by an internal panel. **Where there are any concerns about an NQSW's progress, these should be raised as soon as possible with the ASYE co-ordinator and HR if necessary, so that additional measures can be provided to support the NQSW.**

Completed ASYE portfolios may be looked at by other agencies within Greater Manchester as part of the external moderation process. Portfolios may also be requested by the national moderation panel.

## 7. Study leave

Where NQSWs undertake the Griffin Care course alongside the work-based portfolio, they are entitled to three private study days over the year. If they complete the accredited ASYE module at a HEI, they are entitled to five study days (Social Work Consultant to advise NQSW which course is on offer at the time).

These days are separate to the protected development time that takes place during the ordinary working day/week and which should focus on tasks that contribute to the NQSW's learning and development.

## 8. Managing concerns

The portfolio establishes a link with the employer's capability processes, providing prompts at review points and space to record any concerns or issues. However, where capability issues emerge, the assessor will be expected to follow the capability procedure and to inform the ASYE co-ordinator and HR. Any employment issues that arise during the ASYE will be managed separately through performance management and the capability process.

## 9. Submission of portfolio

Once complete, an electronic copy of the portfolio should be submitted via email to the ASYE co-ordinator. They will check the contents of the portfolio against the Skills for Care requirements. Where elements are missing, the portfolio will be returned and the elements requested prior to the ASYE internal moderation panel.

## 10. Post-two-years qualifying guidance

Where a social worker has been qualified for less than two years, they are classed as 'newly qualified' (NQSW) and would ordinarily complete the ASYE programme if they are new to a social work post with Manchester City Council within that time. The aim of ASYE is to help consolidate the NQSW's learning from their recent social work training and prepare them for their career as a social worker. In this scenario, the manager should contact the ASYE co-ordinator, who will advise of the next steps required.

Social workers who have been qualified for longer than two years would not be expected to undertake ASYE, unless there was a specific reason for them to do so, as identified by their line manager. In this scenario, the manager should contact the ASYE co-ordinator with details of why they think the social worker should do the ASYE, and details of any employment or voluntary experiences they gained in the period between qualifying and starting in their post. (This information is required to understand what, if any, social work skills and knowledge they have been using in this period.) The ASYE co-ordinator will then raise the request at the ASYE panel for a decision to be made about whether ASYE is the most appropriate route for the social worker's development, or if there are other more suitable CPD routes (considering the needs of both the social worker and department).

Where it is determined that ASYE is not required but the social worker is in their first social work post, they should be supported in supervision to draw up a personal development plan (PDP) with clearly identified areas for development and opportunities to help them meet identified goals; the PDP should be reviewed periodically over the first six months in their role. The manager should also identify appropriate training opportunities, eg. safeguarding, Mental Capacity Act, Care Act, and support them to access the training as soon as it is possible and practicable to do so. The social worker's caseload should also be carefully considered (the department's case-weighting tool can be used to help establish if the caseload is too heavy or too light).

In addition to the PDP, training opportunities and considered caseload, it may be appropriate for the social worker to access an accredited course at one of the Greater Manchester universities. Please contact the ASYE co-ordinator or Social Work Consultant in your locality for further discussion about this.

## 11. ASYE portability

The role of ASYE assessor should be undertaken by the team manager or senior social worker in the team in which the NQSW is based. If the NQSW moves teams during their ASYE, responsibility for the assessor role will move with them, ie. it will become the responsibility of the incoming team. However, if the original assessor wishes to remain in the role for the duration of the ASYE, this is acceptable if all parties agree, but the default expectation is that the incoming team would take over.

Where there is to be a change in assessor, a handover should take place so that the original assessor can update the new assessor in regard to progress, areas for development etc for the remainder of the ASYE.

Please contact the SW Consultants if you have any queries about the above.

