



## 1) Applying for AMHP Qualifying Training

- This guidance is intended to support qualifying Colleagues in preparing to apply for AMHP Training Course. Schedule 1 of the Mental Health (Approved Mental Health Professionals) (Approval) (England) Regulations (2008) (hereafter referred to as 'AMHP Regulations') specifies the professional requirements, as follows:

“(a) A social worker registered with the General Social Care Council [now HCPC]. (*Social Work England*)

(b) A first level nurse, registered in Sub-Part 1 of the Nurses' Part of the Register maintained under article 5 of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001(1), with the inclusion of an entry indicating their field of practice is mental health or learning disabilities nursing.

(c) An occupational therapist registered in Part 6 of the Register maintained under article 5 of the Health Professions Order 2001(2). Or

(d) A chartered psychologist who is listed in the British Psychological Society's Register of Chartered Psychologists and who holds a relevant practising certificate issued by that Society (3)”.

- At first, discussions must take place between Colleagues and their Managers, to clearly identify how pursuance of AMHP Training aligns with the individuals continued professional development. This should be formally reflected upon using the Great Performance Conversation framework. Which must highlight a clear plan of progression, whilst evidencing how the individual is practising at an Advanced Social Worker level (as defined by the Professional Capabilities Framework). [Please see appendix 1 for the template to record this on \(imbedded document titled: 'PCF Advance Social Workers'\)](#).

Managers are required to guide colleagues with working towards this but can seek advice from the Training and Education Officer (TEO) (Mental Health) based within the Adults Workforce Learning and Development Team.

- The requirement is that those interested in completing AMHP Training, must undertake preparatory work before making an application for the course. To include:
  - 1) Shadowing a minimum of three Mental Health Act (MHA) assessments, to develop familiarity with the AMHP role. One of these should include a 'community' assessment.
  - 2) Write a reflective Case Analysis based on a case for which the individual has social care responsibility, and where mental health difficulties were present. It should not be based on the MHA assessments shadowed.

The analysis needs to focus on and address each of the following competence areas (as derived from Schedule 2 of the AMHP Regulations (2008)):

- Critical understanding, substantial working familiarity with, and application of social perspectives on mental health and mental disorder. Including an understanding of



how social structures and conditions affect the development of severe mental distress and recovery.

- Critical understanding and substantial working familiarity with medical and other perspectives on mental health and mental disorder;
  - Critical understanding of holistic assessment and the ability to assess individual service user's needs;
  - The ability to critically analyse the assessment of risk in the case being analysed;
  - The ability to put together and co-ordinate a package of care;
  - Knowledge and critical understanding of legislation and its application to the case being analysed;
  - Demonstrate anti-discriminatory practice in direct work with service users;
  - Demonstration of practice skills (including the development of empathetic relationships) in a range of social interventions with individuals, families, and communities;
  - Final evaluation of the candidate's assessment and intervention.
- Between March and May, advice will be provided via multimedia around 'top tips' for making an application.

A 'briefing' session will be facilitated in November and during which, the TEO will provide an overview of the application process for the course, the selection criterion, details of the course, and the Derby City Council post-qualifying expectations.

To apply for the course, an application form and personal statement must be completed, which will be provided by the University commissioned to deliver the course. The application will need to be agreed and endorsed by the persons' Team Manager. Both documents will be reviewed locally and form the basis for making a decision about whether or not to invite the applicant for an interview.

The interview panel will consist of the AMHP Lead and TEO, who will make the initial decision about offering a place on the course (or not). If an offer is made, this will be subject to the University agreeing with the decision of the interview panel, who will be undertaking the task on behalf of the Higher Education Institute. Feedback will be provided after the interview to every applicant.

- Candidates undertaking AMHP Training, are required to attend a 'pre-course' meeting with the TEO and a Practice Mentor Assessor (PMA), to identify their learning needs. The AMHP Lead will confirm PMA arrangements.
- If the panel are unable to offer a place on the course, they will provide feedback focusing on further knowledge, skills, or practice development required.



- The following development plan is recommended to aid preparation for a subsequent application to be made:
  - To shadow six MHA assessments, including at least one in the community.
  - To write reflective accounts based on each assessment, exploring learning gained around legislation, case law, mental disorder, and core skills and values. [Please see appendix 2 for a template in which to record these findings \(imbedded document titled: 'reflection tool – preparing for AMHP practice'\)](#).
  - To critically reflect on assessments, through 3-monthly supervision. The AMHP Lead will identify the Supervisor. [Please see appendix 3 for a supervision proforma that could be utilised to record discussions \(imbedded document titled: 'template for pre-AMHP supervision'\)](#).
- Please note that once the AMHP course has begun and if the candidate is supported by their Manager to complete it, all efforts must be made to meet the course requirements. If the candidate decides not to complete the course, does not practice as an AMHP, or leaves the employment of Derby City Council within two-years of approval as an AMHP, the authority might seek reimbursement of the course fees.

### 2) Post-Qualifying Arrangements and AMHP Approval Requirements

- Upon successful completion of the course and once written confirmation has been received from University, Derby City Council will consider the candidates' approval as an AMHP. The process will be:
  - The candidate will need to make themselves available for AMHP rota cover, once a week. They will be 'paired' on the rota with an approved AMHP but expected to take the lead with undertaking MHA assessments.
  - Three MHA assessments need to be completed within the first 3-month period, in addition to any assessments for Community Treatment Orders or Guardianship Orders. N.B., to aid development and application of the wider aspects of the MHA, candidates are strongly encouraged to be involved in assessments for the latter, if/when the opportunity arises.
  - Once the three assessments have been undertaken, the candidate is to alert the AMHP Lead and TEO who will arrange an approval meeting. They will also need to forward the details i.e., LAS numbers of three assessments for which they have written the AMHP reports. Which will be reviewed and considered as part of the approval process.
  - In addition to which, the panel will examine the individuals' critical understanding of the five key competence areas as laid out in Schedule 2 of the AMHP regulations. Specifically: 1) application of values, 2) knowledge of the legal and policy framework, 3) knowledge of mental disorder, 4) skills of working in partnership, and 5) skills in making and communicating informed decisions.
  - The role of the Local Authority will be to consider recommendation for approval to the Strategic Director of People's Services. This is for the purposes of



approval under section 114 of the Mental Health Act (1983), to perform the functions of an Approved Mental Health Professional under that Act for a period not exceeding five years. The recommendations of the AMHP Lead and TEO will be documented on the AMHP approval form, which should include all collated evidence e.g., qualification certificates.

- Once approval has been awarded, the Local Authority will notify the AMHP via an Approval Letter. The letter will confirm the start date and the manager will be required to complete an establishment control form to inform HR/Pay Services and amend substantive post to Grade L Social Worker/ AMHP accordingly. A copy of this letter will be placed on the AMHPs personnel file.
- Following approval and for the first year of post-qualifying practice, AMHP specific group supervision will be facilitated by the TEO on a bi-monthly basis (every other month).
- N.B., in accordance with AMHP Regulation 5, when any approval is granted, it shall be subject to the following conditions:
  - (a) “in each year that the AMHP is approved, the AMHP shall complete at least 18 hours of training agreed with the approving LSSA as being relevant to their role as an AMHP;
  - (b) the AMHP shall undertake to notify the approving LSSA in writing as soon as reasonably practicable if they agree to act as an AMHP on behalf of another LSSA, and when such agreement ends;
  - (c) the AMHP shall undertake to cease to act as an AMHP and to notify the approving LSSA immediately if they are suspended from any of the registers or listings referred to in the professional competencies, or if any such suspension ends, and
  - (d) the AMHP shall undertake to cease to act as an AMHP and to notify the approving LSSA immediately if they no longer meet at least one of the professional requirements”.
- In the event that a candidate does not fulfil the requirements for approval, they will be informed by the AMHP Lead both verbally and in writing. The feedback will highlight further actions for the individual to take, in preparing to make another application for approval.
- Approved Mental Health Professionals who are required within their contract of employment to undertake AMHP duties and those who do not make reasonable efforts to fulfil this, may be in breach of their contract. The Local Authority will take all reasonable steps to assist and enable individuals to meet the requirements under Managing performance capability policy and procedures.
- The Local Authority will maintain an up-to-date database of approved AMHPs. Which in accordance with Regulation 8, should include the name and profession of the AMHP, the date of approval, details of any period of suspension, details of the completion of training to comply with Regulation 5(a), details of their approval as an



AMHP within the previous five years, the name of other LSSAs for whom the AMHP has agreed to act as an AMHP, and the date and reason for the end of approval (if applicable).

### 3) Approval Maintenance

- Assessment – AMHPs are required to complete a minimum of six MHA assessments per approval year, which should not include assessments completed to consider a Community Treatment Order or a Guardianship Order.
- Support and Supervision:
  - Local AMHP Meetings take place on a monthly basis and AMHPs are expected to attend a minimum of eight.
  - There are also local AMHP Peer Supervision Groups which should take place 3-monthly, and all AMHPs are expected to attend a minimum of three a year.
  - For quality assurance and to facilitate a more person-centred and critically reflective approach, 1:1 AMHP Peer Supervision arrangements are in place. The AMHP Lead (or their nominated representative), will identify the pairings of AMHPs who then need to make arrangements to meet every other month. For information around the requirements and expectations of these sessions, [please refer to appendix 4 \(imbedded document titled: 'AMHP Peer 1:1 Supervision Guidance'\)](#).
  - Using LAS, each AMHP report will be reviewed upon completion and brief written feedback will be noted on the system. Any significant gaps or quality assurance concerns will be feedback to the AMHP.
- Continuing Professional Development – in adherence with AMHP Regulation 5: “in each year that the AMHP is approved, the AMHP shall complete at least 18 hours of training agreed with the approving LSSA as being relevant to their role as an AMHP”.
- Record Keeping – AMHPs are expected to maintain their own records, as a reminder of their approval expiry date. Annual records need to detail the MHA assessments completed within the approval year, relevant training attended, and AMHP meetings and supervision sessions attended (both group and 1:1). [Please see appendix 5 \(imbedded document titled: 'Annual AMHP Stats' Template'\)](#). These must be sent to the AMHP Lead and their manager as evidence of adherence to Approval requirements.

### 4) AMHP Reapproval Requirements

- 2-3 months prior to the expiry of the 'approved period', the Local Authority will notify the AMHP and their Team Manager. The Local Authority will arrange an AMHP reapproval meeting and confirm a date by which they need to receive written evidence from the AMHP.
- In advance of the reapproval meeting, the AMHP will need to forward to the reapproval panel members, the following information:
  - Details i.e., LAS numbers of three assessments for which they have written the



AMHP reports. Which will be reviewed and considered as part of the reapproval process.

- Annual records for each of the five preceding years of approval. To include details of the number of assessments completed, hours of AMHP relevant CPD undertaken, and the AMHP meetings and supervision sessions attended.
- The AMHP Lead will collate feedback from LAS quality assurance checks, to consider as part of the reapproval decision-making.
- During the reapproval meeting, the panel will examine the AMHPs' critical understanding of the five key competence areas as laid out in Schedule 2 of the AMHP regulations. Specifically: 1) application of values, 2) knowledge of the legal and policy framework, 3) knowledge of mental disorder, 4) skills of working in partnership, and 5) skills in making and communicating informed decisions.
- The role of the Local Authority will be to consider recommendation for reapproval to the Strategic Director of People's Services. This is for the purposes of approval under section 114 of the Mental Health Act (1983), to perform the functions of an Approved Mental Health Professional under that Act for a period not exceeding five years. The recommendations of the AMHP Lead and TEO will be documented on the AMHP reapproval form.
- Once approval has been awarded, the Local Authority will notify the AMHP via an Approval Letter. A copy of this letter will be placed on the AMHPs personnel file.
- Where the Local Authority suspends approval, or when an individual decides not to practice on the rota as an AMHP, in conjunction with HR processes it will be considered if they revert to the original pay grade for non-AMHPs.

### 5) Procedure for AMHP Absences

- In the event of a planned absence, a discussion must take place between the AMHP, their Team Manager, and the AMHP Lead. This is to agree the absence and explore how the AMHP can be supported to maintain links and competency.
- The length of absence determines which route to follow, as below:

**Up to a 12-months absence** – if still at work, the AMHP will need to continue meeting annual requirements (as detailed earlier), with the exception of completing MHA assessments. If any conditions are made for a returning AMHP, these have to be met before they resume their AMHP status.

If an AMHP is absent from work for this period of time, they must alert the AMHP Lead upon their return, so that a plan can be agreed for their return to AMHP practice. Which may include 'shadowing' other AMHPs during MHA assessments. Meanwhile, the returning AMHP must attend a Legal Update session.

**12-24 months absence** – If the 5-year approval period has not expired, a panel discussion will be necessary, to consider a formal re-induction programme. Which should include evidence of previous training, and an agreement of a specified period/amount of





shadowing experiences to be undertaken by the returning AMHP.

If the 5-year approval period has expired, the usual reapproval process must be followed (as described earlier).

**2-5 years absence** – If the 5-year approval period has not expired, the following re-induction process will need to be followed:

- The returning AMHP will need to complete 18-hours of relevant training.
- They must resume attendance at AMHP meetings and supervision sessions.
- Shadow three MHA assessments, including one in the community.
- Develop a reflective analysis (approximately 1500 words in length) incorporating critique around: 1) legislation, 2) local and national policy, 3) learning from the assessments (both good practice and what could have been done differently), 4) values/ethics, and 5) reference to the Principles of the MHA.
- Once these tasks are complete, a meeting will be arranged to consider reapproval of the AMHP.

**Over 5-years absence** – full AMHP Training will be required and the application process as described in section 1, will need to be followed.

### 6) Transfer of Approval or Acting on Behalf of Another Local Authority

- This section is concerned with practising AMHPs who are potentially approved by another Local Authority and are seeking approval by Derby City Council. In addition to the arrangements for AMHPs approved by Derby City Council and wishing to act on behalf of another Local Authority.
- The request for approval by Derby City Council will be considered via the formal approval panel process (as described earlier). The following should apply or be obtained:
  - Written confirmation of formal appointment from the previous Local Authority, together with a reference from their previous AMHP Lead that they are competent to practice. [Please see appendix 6 for proforma to be utilised \(imbedded document titled: 'Application for Transfer of Warrant Form from Another Authority to Derby City'\)](#).
  - Evidence of a completion of a recognised AMHP training programme.
  - Confirmation of completion of 18 hours AMHP relevant training.
  - Evidence of recent practice as an AMHP.
  - Shadowing a minimum of 2 MHA assessments within the new authority, at least one of which they must lead.



- As stipulated in AMHP regulations, any Derby City Council AMHP who becomes authorised to act on behalf of another Local Authority, must advise Derby City Council in writing via the AMHP Lead, and again on the ending of any such authorisation.
- The AMHP Lead for Derby City Council may periodically communicate with the AMHP Lead for the other Authority, to share relevant information regarding training hours and the maintenance of approval.
- AMHPs are responsible for informing Derby City Council of any other work they are undertaking with another employer. In order that working time can be monitored along with appropriate rest periods, in accordance with the Working Time Directive.
- If an AMHP's approval is ended, Derby City Council will inform any other Local Authorities they are aware the AMHP is also authorised by.

### 7) Ending or Suspending Approval

- Derby City Council will end the approval of any AMHP, in line with the AMHP regulations, as follows:
  - (1) "...a person shall cease to be approved to act as an AMHP at the end of the day on which their period of approval expires.
  - (2) ... the approving LSSA shall end the approval of a person it has approved to act as an AMHP before their period of approval expires —
    - (a) in accordance with a request in writing to do so from that AMHP
    - (b) if it is no longer satisfied that the AMHP has appropriate competence taking into account the matters set out in Schedule 2
    - (c) immediately upon becoming aware that the AMHP —
      - (i) is no longer a person who meets at least one of the professional requirements,
      - (ii) is in breach of any of the conditions set out in regulation 5, or
      - (iii) has been approved to act as an AMHP by another LSSA."
- Unless negotiated otherwise in advance, Derby City Council will also end the authorisation and approval of any AMHP leaving the employment of Derby City Council, on the day after their final working day.
- Any AMHP subject to performance or capability procedures in relation to their practice, may have their approval ended or their authorisation temporarily suspended until satisfactory conclusion of the procedures. Should this be the case, they will revert to a non-AMHP post until they are able to be both approved and authorised.
- Derby City Council will suspend the authorisation and approval of any AMHP if their required professional registration has been suspended (as a Social Worker, Nurse, Occupational Therapist, or Psychologist). As per the AMHP regulations, approval can be re-instated once this suspension period is ended, provided Derby City Council remain confident in the AMHP's competence. Authorisation should not be re-instated until the





Head of Service/AMHP Lead, and Strategic Director have reviewed the individual circumstances and are satisfied that ongoing approval and authorisation is appropriate.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1:



PCF Advance Social  
Workers - template for

### Appendix 2:



Reflection Tool -  
Preparing for AMHP F

### Appendix 3:



Template for  
Pre-AMHP Supervision

### Appendix 4:



AMHP Peer 1-1  
Supervision Guidance

### Appendix 5:



Annual AMHP Stats  
Template - June 2023

### Appendix 6:



Application for  
Transfer of Warrant F