

## THE CARE CERTIFICATE FUNDAMENTAL CARE SKILLS FOR UNREGISTERED PRACTITIONERS



# *Information for Applicants*

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**This booklet gives a brief outline of the Care Certificate for Unregistered Practitioners and the expectations of the organisation in relation to it.**

### Workbooks

1. Understanding my Role
2. Communication and Interpersonal Skills
3. Respect, Privacy and Dignity
4. Recovery and Person-Centred Care
5. Safeguarding Children and Adults
6. Handling Information
7. Equality and Diversity
8. Basic Life Support and Health & Safety
9. Infection Prevention and Control
10. Duty of Care
11. Fluids and Nutrition
12. Mental Health, Dementia and Learning Disabilities
13. My On-going Practitioner Development

## What is the Care Certificate, and what does it mean for me?

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### *What is the Care Certificate?*

The Care Certificate is an assessment of fundamental care skills for unregistered practitioners.<sup>1</sup> It is completed and assessed on the job, and acts as a comprehensive and compassion-focussed, workplace induction.

### *What's the point of it?*

The purpose of the Care Certificate is to improve our services, by ensuring that all staff have the skills and qualities to deliver safe, effective and compassionate care. Its nature is fundamental (i.e. it is a baseline only), and it has been developed in response to alarming reports of substandard care in some organisations (see, for example, Francis 2013).

### *Who does the Care Certificate apply to?*

All unregistered staff working with service users and carers have to undertake the Care Certificate before they can work outside of direct supervision.

### *Where do I get the workbooks and guidance documents?*

All 13 workbooks and all guidance material are available in electronic format on the internal AWP website.

- Internal applicants can find it now by visiting the AWP Unregistered Ourspace page.
- External applicants can access the relevant documents after having been assigned an Ourspace account at the start of their employment. In most cases, printed resources will be available in the teams and at Trust induction.

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<sup>1</sup> AWP defines an 'unregistered practitioner' as anyone who contributes to care or recovery activities involving service users and/or carers, who is not registered to practise with a professional body (such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council). Whilst the majority of unregistered practitioners are healthcare assistants and community support workers, the term includes psychological practitioners, OT technicians and assistants, physiotherapy technicians, art psychotherapy studio assistants, and several others.

## I'm new to AWP – what do I need to do?

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The first **six** months of your employment will be a probationary period. You will be supported to complete the Care Certificate within the first **three to four** months of your employment. This will form part of your job, and you will be assigned a tutoring team to guide and support you. In order to pass your probationary period, the certificate will need to be fully completed and passed. At your induction you will be guided towards the internal, online resources and workbooks you need.

### *Will my existing qualifications be taken into account?*

Yes. If you can provide physical evidence of prior learning (such as certificates of attainment or competency sign-off sheets), this can be cross-referenced with the Care Certificate standards. This will mean that you may not have to complete all aspects of the Care Certificate.

### *What if I already have the Care Certificate from my previous organisation?*

If you have already been awarded the Care Certificate from another mental health provider you may only have to complete the 'Understanding my Role' workbook. If it has been awarded by an acute healthcare provider you will have to complete a 'refresher' on some key topics, such as 'Mental Health, Dementia and Learning Disabilities'. You will, however, need to have in your possession the completed workbooks from your previous organisation. **The certificate alone is not enough.**<sup>2</sup>

### *Does successful completion of the Care Certificate mean that I will pass my probationary period?*

Whilst the Care Certificate provides a general measure of competency at this level, it does not, on its own, guarantee passing the probationary period. If your conduct is inappropriate or your performance suboptimal, this will be considered above and beyond the domains of the Care Certificate. All Trust policies, protocols and regulations apply in addition to the Care Certificate requirements.

### *What happens if I don't pass?*

You will be given support, guidance and the resources to help you to complete the Care Certificate to a satisfactory standard. If, after this support, you are unable to complete the certificate, your employment will be terminated on or before the end of the probationary period.

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<sup>2</sup> This is due to the risk of plagiarism, and the potential lack of consistency in quality assurance between organisations in the early phases of national implementation. If employees do not have the actual workbooks, it is their responsibility to contact their previous employer to obtain this information.

# I'm an internal applicant – what do I need to do?

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The probationary period does not apply to internal applicants, but the Care Certificate does. If you work at 22.5 hours per week or more, you will have six months in which to complete the 13 workbooks. If you work less than this, you can negotiate an achievable completion timeframe with your team manager. As stated above, if you already have the certificate (from AWP or another organisation), or if you have prior accredited and relevant learning, you will not be required to complete the whole certificate.

## General Information

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### *Is the Care Certificate an accredited programme?*

The Care Certificate will be nationally-recognised, but it is not a qualification. This means that successful completion does not currently lead to a formal certificate of academic attainment from a university or a college. It will function as a quality assurance passport, which will form the basis of your personal development plan (PDP).

### *Will I have to re-do the Care Certificate in the future if I move to another organisation?*

No. There will be aspects of the certificate that will need to be re-done as part of your general induction (such as 'Understanding my Role'), but the majority of the certificate can be carried with you throughout your career.

### *Who is responsible for what, and where can I access further support?*

You will be responsible for completing the Care Certificate, but you will receive support from your clinical tutors and other members of the care team. The completed Care Certificate will be signed-off by your team manager.

### *What happens if I'm struggling to complete it?*

Whilst it is the employee's responsibility to complete the Care Certificate, there will be support from the designated tutoring team, and from other team members in general.

# Roles and Responsibilities

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## *What are my responsibilities?*

- To understand the content and purpose of the Care Certificate.
- To take full responsibility for completing the Care Certificate with the support of other team members.
- To take full responsibility for managing the timeframe of the Care Certificate to ensure it is completed within the three to four month period, and be proactive in identifying areas in need of improvement and seeking the support for this from colleagues.

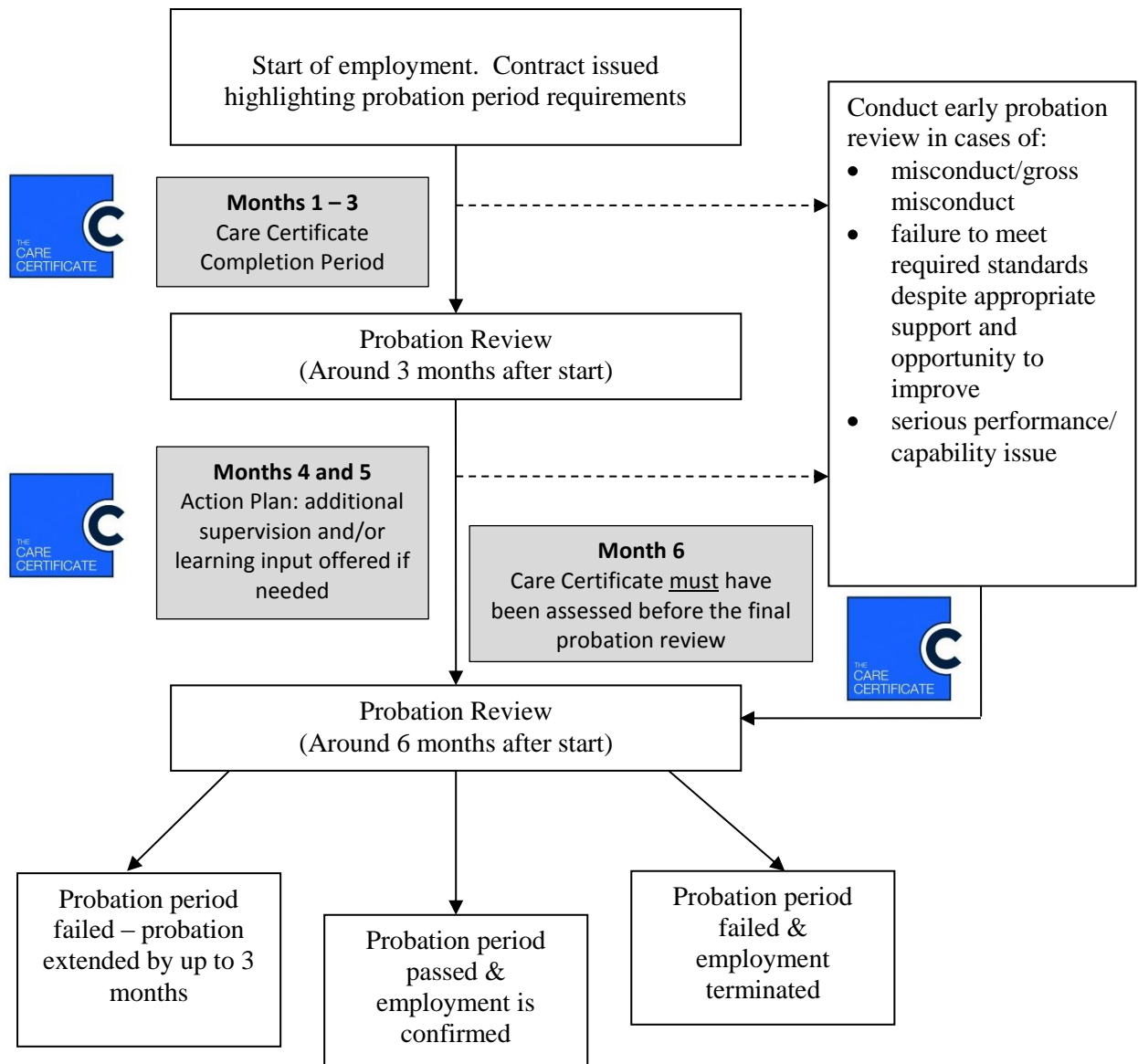
## *What will the clinical tutors do?*

- Support you to complete the Care Certificate by offering close supervision and observing your practice, offering constructive feedback.
- Liaise with your team manager on your progress.
- Help to keep you to a manageable timescale.

## *What will my team manager do?*

- Ensure all team members understand the content and purpose of the Care Certificate.
- Liaise with you and your tutoring team to keep appraised of progress.
- Sign-off the final, completed Care Certificate.
- Inform Human Resources in the event of you not completing the certificate to the required standard.

# Outline of the Probationary Period



**Further information, support and clarification:**

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Search AWP UNREGISTERED on Ourspace and follow the links to the CARE  
CERTIFICATE page.

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