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**(Senior) Housing Standards Officer Career Grade Scheme**

The following career grade criteria shall be applied to all Housing Standards Officer (HSO) posts.

All references in this scheme to *competence criteria* and to *competency* relates to the (Senior) Housing Standards Officers Competence Criteria.

**Housing Standards Officers**

1. Housing Standards Officers will be appointed on salary Grade 8.
2. HSOs will accrue relevant experience and develop competency against the *competency criteria*.
3. For post holders taking up a position as an HSO for the first time the following criteria will be used to help determine the total years of relevant experience:

* For post holders who have previously held an equivalent HSO role in another local authority, the total of their local authority experience in such a capacity plus any additional relevant experience.
* For all post holders, experience directly relevant to the role of an HSO including experience of enforcing legislation, working in a technical field relevant to the post, dealing with the public in a service context, working within local government.
* Such experience will be weighted by its quality taking into account such factors as its depth and breadth, how directly it relates to the work of the HSO post, how recent it is. Experience which does not involve either regulatory enforcement or directly relevant technical work is unlikely to be sufficient to accrue more than two years relevant experience.
1. Upon offer of appointment, an individual will receive a statement in writing of the number of years of relevant experience they have accrued to date to meet the requirements of this scheme. This will be determined by the AD (Housing Standards and Improvement).
2. Experience of doing the day-to-day job of an HSO will normally accrue like-for-like years of relevant experience to help meet the criteria for progression to Senior HSO. In exceptional cases where the quality of an individual’s experience is abnormally poor (for example because of prolonged absence from work or an inability to take on the full range of duties of the post) then the total service period may be reduced by the AD (Housing Standards and Improvement) for the purpose of calculating relevant experience as part of this scheme.
3. It will normally be expected that an HSO will be able annually to develop competency in at least 20% of the total relevant competence criteria. A post holder should therefore have developed competency against all the competency criteria within a five-year period. Some HSOs who have significant prior experience, for example, may be able to fully develop all competencies within a year. The targets for competency development will be formally discussed as part of the Performance Development Review (PDR) and recorded as part of the post holder’s PDR action plan.

**Senior Housing Standards Officers**

1. Senior Housing Standards Officers will be appointed on salary Grade 10.
2. Senior HSOs will be expected to carry out some work at a higher level than HSOs and to operate with a greater degree of autonomy and less need for supervision. This may in part be reflected in the level of delegated, or appointed, authority that they are given.
3. All HSOs will have the opportunity to progress to Senior HSO under this scheme.
4. Where there is significant underperformance, or unacceptable behaviour, then the Head of Housing may withhold progression through the scheme until such times as performance, and/or behaviour, has become acceptable. All post holders will be advised as soon as is reasonably possible if their performance, or behaviour, is unacceptable and given all reasonable support and opportunity to help them make the necessary improvements.
5. Paragraphs 5 and 10 shall apply irrespective of whether the Council’s disciplinary and/or capability procedures have been invoked. Any post holder aggrieved by a decision to withhold progression shall have the right to raise the matter through the Council’s grievance procedure.
6. Appointment to Senior HSO will be subject to achieving all three of the following criteria:
7. Three years of relevant experience (refer paragraphs 3 to 5).
8. Achievement of all the competencies as detailed within the (Senior) Housing Standards Officers Competence Criteria.
9. Holding a technical qualification at National Qualifications Framework Level 4 (HNC or equivalent), or HNC/BTEC in Environmental Health (Housing), or an equivalent comparable, or higher, qualification relevant to housing standards work as determined by the AD (Housing Standards and Improvement)

**Review of the Scheme**

1. In order to ensure its continuing relevance, the scheme will be formally reviewed and, if necessary, revised by Assistant Director AD (Housing Standards and Improvement) Post holders who may be directly affected by any revisions to the scheme will be consulted as part of the review process.
2. Where any revision to the scheme significantly impairs the opportunity for an individual post holder to progress to Senior HSO, then that post holder will have the option of remaining on the current scheme for a period not exceeding twelve months from the date of revision. This time period may be extended in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Head of Housing. If such a post holder has not fully met the criteria for appointment as Senior HSO within this time period, then they will transfer onto the revised scheme and will then need to satisfy the criteria of that scheme.
3. Post holders who are already Senior HSOs will not have to meet any revised criteria to maintain their senior status. However, maintaining capability to perform the duties of the post will apply in any case and Senior HSOs will be expected to ensure that they remain competent. The competency criteria of the scheme will therefore provide some guidance in this respect.

**Consistent Application of the Scheme**

1. All managers responsible for appointing HSOs and for determining progression through the scheme will receive training to ensure consistency and fairness in the application of the scheme.