

Transfer Policy

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Section 1: Overview

1.1 Purpose and general principles

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances in which transfer will be considered, and to explain the associated procedures for participants on the programme.
- 1.1.2 A **transfer** means when a participant moves from one learning hub to another, either within the same local authority or by moving to another. This will normally be at the request of the participant. In exceptional circumstances, Frontline may require a participant to transfer (see [Section 3](#)).
- 1.1.3 Children and families value consistency when it comes to having a social worker involved in key decisions in their lives. Transfers before the end of the full programme can compromise the benefits felt by children in having a stable relationship. Maximising the positive consequences and impact that a participant can have on children and families will be at the forefront of transfer decisions.
- 1.1.4 Transfers may be considered in exceptional circumstances and are always deliberated on a case-by-case basis when all other options and support mechanisms have been exhausted.
- 1.1.5 By accepting a place on the programme participants commit to completing the full programme and to being placed in any of the regions within which Frontline works. Participants will be allocated to a learning hub. Frontline will consider participants' preferences, but it cannot guarantee that the practice preferences of participants will be met.
- 1.1.6 In year 1, transfers can only take place between local authorities that are partnered with Frontline. All year 1 transfers are coordinated and agreed by Frontline. In no circumstances can transfers be arranged by participants or local authorities.
- 1.1.7 In years 2 and 3, it is recognised that participants will sometimes secure alternative employment and then request that it be considered a transfer.
- 1.1.8 Where a participant is an employee at the point of their transfer (normally once the participant is registered with Social Work England as a qualified social worker), transfers can normally only take place between local authorities that are partnered with Frontline. If a participant changes employment to a local authority that is not partnered with Frontline, they can request that this be considered a transfer, and the request will be considered as set out in this policy. If the transfer request is declined, but the participant wishes to go ahead with the move, they will not be able to continue on the programme.



1.2 Responsibilities

1.2.1 The role of the head of delivery (or nominated representative) is normally to:

- approve or decline transfer requests;
- approve additional support arrangements for participants where these are determined necessary.

1.2.2 The partnership and placement manager (PPM) acts as the local authority liaison coordinator for transfer requests. Their role is to:

- inform the local authority's project manager of the transfer request and consequent discussions;
- work with local authorities to establish the availability of alternative suitable practice learning experience opportunities for participants;
- make arrangements for approved transfers, including the signing of an appropriate agreement where the local authority was not previously partnered with Frontline.

1.2.3 The role of the Consultant Social Workers (year 1) or line manager (subsequent years) is to:

- act as the initial point of contact for participants looking to explore a transfer and to direct participants to this policy where relevant;
- ensure that other support mechanisms have been suitably explored;
- attend any transfer meetings and supporting discussions, where required;
- ensure that local authority team managers are included within discussions, where required.

1.2.4 The role of the practice tutor (PT) or dissertation supervisor is to:

- advise participants on the support options available to them;
- convene meetings with relevant attendees to consider transfer requests;
- participate in transfer meetings/discussions where required;
- discuss the potential implications of their transfer requests with the participant where necessary.

1.2.5 The role of principal practice tutor (PPT) is to:

- attend transfer meetings taking place between participants and a prospective local authority where a participant is seeking to transfer to a new region that they supervise.

1.3 Criteria for transfers

1.3.1 Transfers can only take place where the following are met:



- the reason for transfer is exceptional;
- an alternative local authority (usually a Frontline partner) can accommodate the participant, including releasing them for teaching/development days;
- the transfer is agreed with Frontline; and
- other options and support mechanisms have been exhausted.

1.3.2 Frontline will also need to consider:

- how disruptive the transfer would be to the learning hub (this is particularly relevant in year 1 where it may result in a learning hub needing to be disbanded due to no longer having enough participants);
- the timing of the request and how disruptive this is to children and families (e.g., has the request been made during a court case, where it would be difficult to conclude casework);
- whether the local authority/children's trust employer that the participant is looking to move away from is agreement with the transfer.

Section 2: Procedure

2.1 Requesting a transfer

- 2.1.1 If a participant wishes to transfer, they should first discuss it with either their practice tutor/dissertation supervisor and/or CSW/line manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 2.1.2 If the reasons for transfer cannot be resolved or a request to transfer is still desired for other reasons, the participant should submit a [transfer request form](#) outlining the reasons for the request and providing evidence to support the request.

2.2 Consideration of a transfer request

- 2.2.1 Upon receipt of a transfer request, Frontline's academic registry team will share it with relevant delivery staff, normally the PT/dissertation supervisor, principal practice tutor, PPM, and Head of Delivery.
- 2.2.2 The practice tutor/dissertation supervisor will normally co-ordinate a discussion to consider the transfer request against the criteria listed in [section 1.3](#), which may include:
 - the participant's principal practice tutor
 - head of delivery
 - the participant's CSW/line manager



- the local authority team manager
- the local authority project manager

2.2.3 Following these discussions, the head of delivery will either:

- approve the transfer request in principle (i.e., pending the securing of a new placement); or
- decline the transfer request.

2.2.4 At this stage, the head of delivery will notify the academic registry team and partnership and placement manager of the decision reached.

2.3 Arranging a year 1 transfer following approval in principle

2.3.1 Following the approval in principle of the transfer request, the PPM will seek to arrange for the participant to transfer to another placement learning hub, which depending on circumstances, may or may not be in a different local authority. The reason(s) for their transfer will be explained as appropriate.

2.3.2 Where a local authority agrees to take a transferring participant, the transfer can go ahead and a meeting will normally take place to discuss the details of the transfer. This meeting will typically cover the participant's Practice Learning Portfolio and Practice Development Plan, as well as their progress to date and any preparation needed for the transfer either by the participant or the incoming local authority.

2.3.3 Where the participant has requested a transfer to a local authority within the same region they already work in, meeting attendees may include:

- the participant;
- their prospective incoming practice tutor;
- the prospective local authority project manager and CSW;
- the participant's current practice tutor (where required).

2.3.4 Where the participant has requested to transfer to a new Frontline region (e.g., from London to the North East), the PPT of the new prospective region will normally also be in attendance of the meeting.

2.3.5 The PPM will make arrangements for the transfer to the new placement learning hub/local authority and support the participant throughout the process. Participants are responsible for the costs associated with relocating to the new location.

2.3.6 If subsequent issues emerge that prevent the transfer to the incoming local authority/children's trust, Frontline will make further attempts to secure and arrange a new transfer.



- 2.3.7 If, after reasonable attempts, Frontline have been unable to find a suitable alternative local authority, the participant will remain at their current placement/local authority. In these instances, the head of delivery will coordinate a discussion, normally with a participant's CSW and practice tutor to agree appropriate support arrangements and ensure the participant's opportunities for learning are maximised.
- 2.3.8 If the participant does not wish to remain at their current placement/local authority, they can either request to intercalate (and an attempt to arrange a new placement for the participant will be made during the intercalation, although there is no guarantee it will be possible to arrange a new placement) or withdraw from the programme. If a participant stops attending their current placement without formally notifying Frontline of their intentions this will be handled as set out in the [attendance and engagement policy](#).

2.4 Arranging a qualified social worker transfer following approval in principle

- 2.4.1 If the participant is an employee at the point of their transfer (this is normally once the participant is registered with Social Work England as a qualified social worker), participants must honour the notice period and any contractual commitments stated in their employment contract with their local authority or children's trust employer.
- 2.4.2 Following the approval in principle of the transfer request, Frontline will seek to arrange for the participant to transfer to another learning hub, which depending on circumstances, may or may not be in a different local authority.
- 2.4.3 Due to the variance in local authorities' employment policies and procedures, it is not possible to provide a step-by-step process that all participants can expect to follow where they are transferring as a qualified social worker. Therefore, participants will be required to follow any additional steps as outlined by their prospective local authority/children's trust.
- 2.4.4 A transfer can only go ahead once the local authority/children's trust agrees to take the transferring participant and any steps as per 2.4.3 are undertaken to the satisfaction of the local authority/children's trust to which the participant is transferring.
- 2.4.5 Where a transfer involves a change of dissertation supervisor, Frontline will ensure that relevant information is communicated between the outgoing and incoming parties.
- 2.4.6 Frontline will make arrangements for the transfer to the new learning hub/local authority. Participants are responsible for the costs associated with relocating to the new location.
- 2.4.7 If subsequent issues emerge that prevent the transfer to the incoming local authority/children's trust, Frontline will make further attempts to secure and arrange a new transfer. If, after reasonable attempts, Frontline is unable to find a suitable alternative local authority, the participant will remain at their current local authority. In these instances, the head of delivery will



coordinate a discussion, normally with a participant's line manager and dissertation supervisor to agree appropriate support arrangements and ensure the participant's opportunities for learning are maximised.

- 2.4.8 If the participant does not wish to remain at their current local authority, they can either request to intercalate (and an attempt to arrange a new placement for them will be made during the intercalation, although there is no guarantee it will be possible to arrange a new placement) or withdraw from the programme. If a participant stops attending their current placement without formally notifying Frontline of their intentions this will be handled as per the [attendance and engagement policy](#).
- 2.4.9 Where a participant secures a job as a child-focused social worker in a local authority which is not currently partnered with Frontline, and that local authority is unwilling to enter into agreement with Frontline to support the participant's continuing studies, Frontline will not be able to support them to continue on the programme. In such instances, the participant will be deemed withdrawn from the programme.
- 2.4.10 Where a participant secures a job which is not in child-focused social work (whether or not it is within one of Frontline's partner local authorities) this will not constitute a transfer, and Frontline will not be able to support them to continue on the programme. In such instances, the participant will be deemed withdrawn from the programme.

2.5 Declined transfers

- 2.5.1 Where the transfer request is declined, the participant will remain at their current placement/local authority.
- 2.5.2 The head of delivery will coordinate a discussion, normally with a participant's CSW/line manager and practice tutor/dissertation supervisor to agree appropriate support arrangements and ensure the participant's opportunities for learning are maximised.
- 2.5.3 If the participant does not wish to remain at their current local authority, they can either request to intercalate (and an attempt to arrange a new placement for them will be made during the intercalation although there is no guarantee it will be possible to arrange a new placement), or withdraw from the programme. If a participant stops attending their current placement without formally notifying Frontline of their intentions this will be handled as per the [attendance and engagement policy](#).

Section 3: Year 1 transfers initiated by Frontline

- 3.1 During year 1 of the programme, Frontline aims to ensure that participants are provided with a high-quality practice learning experience. However in a small number of cases, the placement



may no longer be viable and Frontline will need to remove participant(s) from the placement learning hub and explore a transfer.

- 3.2 Very occasionally an entire learning hub may be affected, meaning that the placement learning hub must be disbanded. In these instances, it is necessary to move all the participants to other placements via transfer. Where a learning hub has been disbanded, participants will not be able to remain within their current placement.
- 3.3 The PPM will support and make arrangements for the participant to transfer to another learning hub which, depending on circumstances, may or may not be in a different local authority. Frontline will aim to re-allocate participants within the same region wherever possible, but it cannot guarantee this.
- 3.4 Participants will be kept informed throughout this process and multiple discussions will normally take place with participants to determine the best option for them.
- 3.5 If a participant does not wish to accept the alternative placement found for them, they must intercalate whilst an attempt is made to arrange a new placement for them. Please note, that there is no guarantee it will be possible to secure a new placement.
- 3.6 If the participant does not accept the offer of intercalation, they will be excluded from the programme. This must be ratified by a Lancaster University examination board.
- 3.7 If, after reasonable attempts, Frontline have been unable to find a suitable alternative local authority, the participant will normally be required to intercalate and an attempt to arrange a new placement for them will be made during the intercalation. Please note that there is no guarantee it will be possible to arrange a new placement. If the participant does not accept the offer of intercalation the participant will be required to leave the programme and will be excluded. Exclusion of a participant registered as a student with Lancaster University must be ratified by a Lancaster University examination board.

Ratification of an exclusion by the examination board

- 3.8 Frontline's registry team will inform Lancaster University that a participant registered as a student with the university is to be excluded so that this decision can be ratified by an examination board.
- 3.9 The examination board will consider the recommendation of the Frontline's recommendation. The role of the exam board is to consider and ratify the recommendation made in respect of the participant. The exam board must also confirm, to its satisfaction, that due process has been followed.
- 3.10 The examination board will either:
 - Ratify the recommendation that the participant should be excluded; or



- Fail to ratify the recommendation of the Frontline return to study panel and request that a further attempt is made to place the participant before moving to exclusion.

3.11 A participant whose exclusion is ratified by the examination board will be notified of their exclusion and [_may be eligible to have their case reviewed through Student Casework Review Procedures](#).

Section 4: Relevant references

4.1 [Frontline policies and documents](#)

4.1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance:

- Attendance and engagement policy
- Recruitment and Admission Policy
- Bursary & financial policy
- Intercalation Policy
- Withdrawal Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Student Casework Review Procedure
- Lancaster University Academic Malpractice Regulations and Procedures, in particular the following chapter:
 - Academic Appeals