

ANGUS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMITTEE – 7 AUGUST 2001

STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER TRAINING SCHEME

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

ABSTRACT

This report brings forward a scheme of practical training in Angus for student environmental health officers in accordance with the requirements of the qualifications body for Environmental Health Officers in Scotland.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) agree the scheme appended to this report for recruitment and training of student environmental health officers in Angus.
- b) agree that Angus Council will be a "training provider" for student environmental health officers subject to satisfying the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) as to the training plan.

2. INTRODUCTION

The present situation in Scotland on environmental health officer recruitment is one of shortages with indications showing that the number of newly qualified officers is not keeping pace with the number of officers retiring or moving to other areas of work within the Food Standards Agency or SEPA.

Angus Council has always encountered difficulties with recruitment of qualified environmental health officers as it competes with other local authorities and the agencies.

Since the inception of Angus Council there has been no student environmental health officer training undertaken by the Environmental and Consumer Protection Department. While there was establishment for such, no funding was in place until earlier this year following the Council budget review process.

It is in response to this change in circumstance that this reports paves the way forward to reintroducing, after a number of years, student environmental health officer training in Angus.

3. BACKGROUND TO ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) is the professional body, incorporated by Charter, for environmental health officers (EHO's) in Scotland. The Institute, being the qualifications authority for practitioner environmental health officers, sets the standards and training requirements that must be met to become an environmental health officer.

To become an environmental health officer, candidates must obtain the BSc in Environmental Health, through a four year university course and complete a period of practical training with a local authority (the "training provider"). The aim of practical training is to provide students with sound technical and administrative skills, which combined with academic knowledge will produce professionally competent environmental health officers (EHO's).

4. TRAINING SCHEME

REHIS has set down a scheme of practical training and each "training provider" engaged in the practical training of student EHO's is required to prepare a "training plan" which satisfies the REHIS training scheme. The training scheme sets out everyday areas of work to which student EHO'S should be exposed.

The period of practical training must be delivered over a minimum of 48 weeks and requires the student to receive support from the "training provider" towards the completion of seven project elements set down in the REHIS Training Manual.

Students may undertake the training during university vacation periods throughout the course of their academic study ("integrated"), defer all practical training until the completion of their theoretical studies ("end on"), or may, by agreement with REHIS obtain their training by means of a series of credits spread over a period of time acceptable to REHIS.

In specifying a minimum period for the training, REHIS expects that the "training provider" will have regard to the interest and aptitude of the student in determining the amount of time to be spent on each individual element of training. The "training provider" should not hesitate to require more time than the minimum 48 weeks period, should they deem this necessary.

All students must be registered with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland at the commencement of their practical training and this registration shall be subject to the submission of a student training plan provided by the "training provider".

Student training should be supervised by experienced qualified environmental health officers who will advise on the correct approach to the task. Additionally the "training provider" shall appoint a training officer, who will be responsible for managing the student training programme.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Report No 224/01 to the Environmental and Consumer Protection Committee on 20 February 2001 and to the Personnel and Property Committee on 13 March 2001 agreed the appointment and funding of a student environmental health officer post on Grade AP1 from 1 April 2001.

Assuming recruitment can be made ahead of the start of the academic year commencing 1 October 2001, the cost this year is likely to be in the order of £3892 and in a full year 'integrated' with university £7784 (part-time two years) or 'end on' post graduate £15,568 (full time one year).

Provision is made within the Environmental and Consumer Protection Department budget to meet the cost of either training options.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS

There are no human rights issues raised by this report.

7. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Law and Administration, Director of Finance and Director of Personnel have been consulted on the contents of this report.

S R Heggie
Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing this report.

IW/FMCI
9.7.01

ANGUS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSUMER PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

**SCHEME OF RECRUITMENT AND PRACTICAL TRAINING
OF STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) is the professional and qualifications body for environmental health officers (EHO's) in Scotland. The Institute sets the standards that must be achieved to become an EHO.
- 1.2 Candidates must obtain a BSc in Environmental Health and complete a period of practical training with a local authority (training provider). On completion of the practical training the student EHO must then pass a professional interview to gain the REHIS Diploma of Professional Competence to practice as an EHO.
- 1.3 The aim of practical training is to provide student EHO's with sound technical and administrative skills which, combined with academic knowledge will produce professionally competent environmental health officers, capable of identifying, quantifying and resolving problems which they may face during their careers. Professional training also provides and reinforces scientific skills. (REHIS).
- 1.4 Student EHO training shall be provided in accordance with the REHIS practical training manual and supported by the arrangements set down within this scheme and the Environmental and Consumer Protection Department Training Plan.

2. RECRUITMENT OF STUDENT EHO'S

- 2.1 The option shall exist to train student environmental health officers either during their vacation periods throughout the course of university study ("integrated") or after graduation at the end of their university period ("end on")
- 2.2 Students in placement with Angus Council will be engaged and employed in accordance with the Council's procedures for recruitment and selection and in accordance with the Council's conditions of service for employees.
- 2.3 Students will be given practical training amounting to a minimum of 48 weeks aggregated over the period of the placement with Angus Council.
- 2.4 Students taking the "integrated" training route will only be offered placement on the successful completion of their 1st year of the university course.
- 2.5 While being open to recruit students from any area, emphasis will be given to providing placement to students resident within Angus.
- 2.6 The Council will aim to maintain a minimum of two student EHO's at any one time dependent on available funding and one year apart to ensure students are employed at differing stages of training.
- 2.7 Students will receive the appropriate salary payments outwith the academic term and when on placement as part of the scheme of practical training.
- 2.8 Students will be registered by the Council with REHIS at the commencement of their placement.
- 2.9 Students placements with the Council will be subject to the condition that the student makes satisfactory progress in his/her academic studies and achieves the relevant degree in environmental health. The Council reserves the right to terminate any

placement where the student fails to make satisfactory progress within the normal prescribed period of study or for obtaining the degree.

2.10 The REHIS scheme of training normally permits student EHO's three attempts to obtain the Diploma in professional practice. If a student fails to meet the required standard after a second attempt they will be given two months notice of termination of the training placement.

The Council will meet the cost of students attending the REHIS professional interview and assessment for the Diploma.

2.11 When the student gains the REHIS Diploma in Professional practice the Council will consider their position on an extension to such employment for a period of up to six months.

3. TRAINING PLAN

Organisation and Responsibilities

3.1 In accordance with the REHIS training scheme the Council, as training providers, will appoint person(s) who will be responsible for the effective training of student EHO's.

3.2 Due to the decentralised routine of the E and C P Department a student will be based normally in one area office where he/she will receive much of their training from officers within that office. Training will also be provided through other area offices and via specialist sections and officers within the Department.

3.3 The following structure for responsible training officers as appointed at 3.1 above and their duties include:-

Department Training Co-ordinator:	Who has responsibility for addressing the general policy on student EHO training and Acts as "Training Officer" in terms of the REHIS Scheme and Manual for practical training.
Student Training Officer:	A senior officer in an area office who has overall responsibility for the training of the student based in that office.
Subject Training Officer:	An officer assigned to train a student in a specific subject.

3.4 Appendix 1 provides further information on the roles and responsibilities involved in student EHO training.

3.5 The structure of training within the Department will be explained to the student EHO during induction in addition to the general Council induction procedure. Induction will be carried out by the student training officer appointed by the training officer/co-ordinator.

3.6 The induction document and provisional training plan at appendix 2 should be completed by the student training officer and the student along with the declaration of commitment from both Council and student.

3.7 Areas of practical training with the REHIS scheme which cannot be provided by Angus Council will be sourced from another local authority or agency. The arrangements will be made by the student training officer.

3.8 A list of locations for training and training providers will be maintained by the training officer/co-ordinator

Records

- 3.9 The training scheme requires students to complete a training record and portfolio detailing the practical training carried out, the elements of the training covered, the competencies acquired and supporting material.
- 3.10 The student training officer shall ensure student EHO's compile their portfolio and maintain a training record as at appendix 3.
- 3.11 On completion of a training area in accordance with the REHIS scheme the student training officer will review all the records associated with that area before signing off the training record summary sheet. Appendix 4

Assessments

- 3.12 On-going assessments will be carried out by the student training officer by
- Regular interviews
 - Checking reports and correspondence created by the student
 - Reviewing the student's training record and portfolio
 - Observation by a qualified officer of actual practical visits and inspections.
 - Requiring the student to prepare a report or case study on a specific subject or training programme area covered.
- 3.13 The student training officer will meet with the student at least once a month to appraise the student's training record and assess progress.
- 3.14 On completion of each training programme area from the REHIS scheme a copy of the student's training record will be sent to the Training Co-ordinator.
- 3.15 The student EHO's food hygiene case study as requested by the REHIS scheme will be supervised and appraised by the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Food).
- 3.16 On nearing completion of a training programme area the student EHO will be required to prepare a report or case study on a specific subject from the area. The subject matter will be selected by the student training officer.
- 3.17 Regular "test" professional interviews will be conducted as part of the appraisal process by senior officers and by arrangements made by the student training officer.
- 3.18 For student EHO's approaching the end of their training "test" professional interview(s) will be taken to form the final appraisal of the student in all training programme areas.
- 3.19 Reports on the final appraisal will be reviewed by the Head of Environmental Health and the training officer(s) to decide if the student is ready for presentation to the REHIS Professional Interview.

Auditing

- 3.20 The training co-ordinator/training officer will undertake periodic audits of student training to ensure the Council scheme of student EHO recruitment and training and the REHIS scheme of practical training is being followed.

IW/JAS

July 2001

ANGUS COUNCIL
Environmental & Consumer Protection Department

Appendix 1
Student EHO Training

Organisation and Responsibilities within the Department

Post	Responsibilities
Student EHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertakes practical training in accordance with REHIS manual and the Council's scheme of EHO student training• Undertakes to complete their academic studies with due diligence• Monitors own progress and inform student training officer of any problems• Keeps portfolio of reports and record of practical training
Student Training Officer e.g. PEHO or SEHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Holds direct responsibility for ensuring student receives sufficient practical training in accordance with the REHIS Manual and Council scheme of EHO student training• Holds monthly meetings with student

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out regular appraisals of student to test progress • Can act as 'assessor' for student training record • Checks student training record on completion of each of the 7 programme areas as per REHIS Manual • Co-ordinate/arrange any external training required • Arranges for subject or specialist training and assign to subject training officer
Subject Training Officer e.g. PEHO, SEHO, EHO CI. Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures student receives adequate instruction in the subject assigned to subject training officer by student training officer • Can act as 'assessor' for student training record • Keeps student training officer briefed of any difficulties with student training
Training Co-ordinator / Training Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with REHIS regarding Council Training scheme • Undertakes student recruitment • Assist co-ordination of external training required • Assist student training officer with regular appraisals • Organise final appraisal ('test' interview) • Carry out audit of student training procedures
Head of Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews final appraisal with student training officer • Reviews audit on training • Makes decision to present student for professional interview

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Environmental & Consumer Protection Department**

**Appendix 2
Student EHO Induction**

Student Training Officer **Student**

1. Method of practical training - "Integrated" / "end on"

2. Date commenced - **3. Date of Registration with REHIS -**

4. Provisional Training Plan -

Training Programme Areas REHIS Manual	Minimum Training Period	Provisional Dates	Subject Training Officers (s)
1. Occupational Health and Safety	8 weeks (40 days)		
2. Food Safety	8 weeks (40 days)		
3. Food Standards	6 weeks (30 days)		
4. Public Health	6 weeks (30 days)		
5. The built Environment	6 weeks (30 days)		

Student Training Officer

Student

PROGRAMME AREA 1 (Refer also to REHIS Manual) OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (at least 8 weeks/40 days)	Date Completed	Student's Signature	Date Assessed	Assessor's Signature
Inspection of Work Places <i>Visit at least 24 premises including all 9 LAE1 categories - retail shops [] offices [] Wholesale shop [] wholesaler [] caterer [] residential accomodation [] Indoor leisure [] outdoor activity centre [] consumer service [] [] enter No visited Record of all inspections in portfolio [] (tick)</i>				
Health and Safety Appraisals <i>During inspections undertake assessments of relevant exposures - ergonomic [] Physical [] biological [] psychological [] social [] (tick)</i>				
Risk Assessment <i>Carry out measurements of exposure for a variety of factors and recommend technical & legal enforcement measures to reduce risk eg. fumes [] noise [] (tick)</i>				
Investigation of Accidents and Complaints <i>Be involved in investigating at least two accidents with major injuries [] and two with injuries resulting in more than three days absence from work [] and two complaints regarding occupational health & safety matters [] (tick)</i>				

STANDARDS OF COMPETENCE FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY				
Plan and implement a schedule of health and safety inspections and investigations				
Plan a health and safety visit to a regulated organisation				
Carry out the health and safety inspection				
Assess the quality of hazard identification in regulated organisations				
Assess the quality of risk assessment in regulated organisations				
Identify specific needs for improving risk control				
Specify targets for improved risk control				
Provide advice on methods to improve risk control				

Environmental & Consumer Protection Department
 Student EHO Training Summary

Student Training Officer
 Student

1. COMPLETION OF TRAINING PROGRAMME AREA

	General Competencies	(1) Occupational Health and Safety	(2) Food Safety	(3) Food Standards	(4) Public Health	(5) The Environment
Date Completed						
Student signature						
Date records checked						
Student training officer signature						

2. APPRAISALS

	(1) Occupational Health and Safety	(2) Food Safety	(3) Food Standards	(4) Public Health	(5) The Environment
Date of Appraisal					
Student training officer signature when satisfied					
Date Report submitted					
Student training officer signature when satisfied					
Date of final appraisal					
Student training officer signature When satisfied					