Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) child and family

Annual report to the Department for Education

April 2022 – March 2023

March 2023

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Section 1. Introduction

1.1 Acknowledgements

Skills for Care would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of all the employers and employees that are involved in the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) for child and family services.
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Section 4 focuses on specific themes which emerged from the learning from different sources. These are equality, diversity and

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learners. The presentation element of the portfolio gives more flexibility to employers to offer alternative methods of assessment. The emphasis is on supporting employers to meet the needs of their NQSWs individual learning needs, taking into account equality, diversity and inclusion. A link to the new web pages can be found in appendix 6.1.

The templates were launched at the annual event

2.3 Internal and external moderation

The moderation templates have a focus on providing feedback to the employer about how the consistency of NQSWs' experience across the dimensions of support, assessment and outcome could be developed further. This feedback is quality assurance evidence and should be used in developing the organisation's annual action plan for continuous development.

The external moderation process, working in a local/regional partnership, is recommended practice for all ASYE programmes. It remains a requirement of the Post Qualifying Standards (Knowledge and Skills Statement) in adult services.

2.4 Action plan for continuous development

The action plan for continuous development of a programme is produced annually by the ASYE co-ordinator working closely with the senior manager with responsibility for the programme. The plan is based on an evaluation of the quality assurance evidence gathered by the programme and is developed by reference to the national evaluation criteria. The plan sets out what programme areas have been strengthened over the previous 12 months and the areas identified for development in the next annual cycle.

The action plan provides evidence of the impact of the ASYE (e.g. through feedback from NQSWs and their assessors and supervisors) which is submitted by each organisation's in support of its annual ASYE grant funding application. The action plan has been launched in advance of implementing the link to the grant funding application in 2023-24. Further information about the action plan can be found in appendix 6.3.

2.5 National quality assurance panel (NQAP)

The new national quality assurance panel (NQAP) will be launched in April 2023. Its purpose is to support, promote and aid development of national consistency of the NQSW experience across the programme, again focussed o595.32 8/ytTf1 595.32 acr 92 reW*nBT

Section 3. Learning from different sources

3.1 The NQSW registration portal

Cohort 10 (2021-22) had 3052 NQSW registrations, following a dip in the previous year which was attributed to the impact of the pandemic. This year there have been 2844 registrations. There have been 2664 completions this year which is a slight increase from last year. A detailed breakdown of registrations and completions can be found in appendix 6.4.

Protected characteristics

Using the ASYE registration portal, Skills for Care has investigated the impact of protected characteristics of NQSWs (gender, age, ethnicity, and nationality) and other factors (region and deferral rate) on the ASYE outcome (pass or fail).

Employers claiming ASYE funding are required to record information on NQSWs, such as demographics, outcomes of six- and twelve-months' reviews, etc., on the Skills for Care portal.

Data for the four most recent cohorts of child and family social workers is summarised below (see Table 1):

***Table** 1*

	Cohort				
	18/19	***19/20***	***20/21***	***21/22***	***Total***
Child & Family NQSWs	2,813	2,977	2,764	3,103	11,655

Of these 11,655 records we currently only have complete cases (i.e., those where we held data on all predictors as well as the success/fail outcome) for 6,419 NQSWs[1] of whom 6,348 (98.9%) passed the ASYE and 71 (1.1%) did not.

By applying a statistical method called logistic regression to the data collected, we have been able to ascertain which, if any, of the protected characteristics/factors above have a significant impact on the ASYE outcome. We used this method as the outcome is binarwacte as, Ws

We have explored with participants through polls areas of interest and support needed for each of these groups.

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NQSW feedback: “I’ve found it really useful to speak with other NQSWs from other authorities to see what their employer is doing with the ASYE. I’ll be encouraging others from my local authority to join the next one.”

Group for Ethnic Minority Social Workers (GEMS) NQSW forum

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By the end of the forum, 32% reported that they were much clearer about how their ASYE programme could address EDI, and 62% felt a little clearer and 6% did not feel clearer.

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3.4 360-degree organisational evaluation tool

Background

A 360-degree tool has been provided to help employers gather feedback that will help them to review and quality assure their ASYE programmes. The tool enables employers to gain a balanced view of their progress because feedback is gathered from multiple stakeholders.

The tool is based around the ASYE programme's evaluation criteria and consists of 33 statements organised under four overarching themes:

1) The NQSW experience is central to the ASYE
2) The ASYE programme is delivered in accordance with the AYSE framework and employer standards
3) The ASYE programme ensures that PQS (previously KSS) and the PCF underpin NQSW professional practice
4) The ASYE programme is integrated within the wider organisational system

Respondents rate how they feel about each statement using a scale from 1 ('Significant development needed') to 5 ('Exceptional strength').

Employers complete the assessment themselves ('self-assessment'), as well as inviting their NQSWs, assessors, supervisors, line managers and others to complete it. Feedback is provided anonymously.

Once complete each employer receives a personalised report which shows their results as an average for their organisation as well as broken down by type of respondent. The tool is used as part of preparation for the quality assurance visits and stimulates insights which are then discussed. This year we have seen the tool become more embedded in this process with many employers using the feedback to draw up action plans, and some going further setting targets for progress which they intend to use the tool to measure. With the introduction of the new action plan for continuous development (as set out in section 2) the 360-degree tool will be an ideal resource for all employers to use to gather feedback as part of their quality assurance process.

The 360-degree evaluation annual report can be found in appendix 6.7.

Key messages

The 360-degree evaluation tool is informing ASYE programme action plans and is being used to set targets and measure the impact of development.

the importance of asking questions to discern information more clearly.

In 2022-23 a bespoke action learning intervention was offered for the first time for organisations that had identified significant areas for improvement in the delivery of the ASYE programme. The intervention uses action learning methodology to help organisations develop an action plan for delivering the programme in areas where particular issues and difficulties are being experienced. The intervention is initiated using activities designed to develop a consensus around the challenges and barriers that are creating difficulties in achieving programme success. This is followed by facilitated virtual action learning sets to explore the issues further with the final stage being the co-production of an action plan. Two organisations have been supported so far by the bespoke action learning intervention.

Key messages

Action learning sets training has resulted in assessors/supervisors re-evaluating and changing their practice in supporting the development of NQSWs.

The majority of ASYE leads were confident in the capability of the ASYE supervisors and assessors within their organisation and ASYE assessors were similarly confident in their own abilities.

Across a number of measures, ASYE leads rated the impact of the ASYE positively (79% average score). ASYE assessors and NOSWs were slightly less positive (71% and 60% respectively[2]). Further exploration of the data is required to determine why this might be( )]TJETQq0.000008871 0 595.32 841.

peer groups for NQSWs, specific one to one conversations with supervisors or as a formal training opportunity. However there is still not a consistent picture of a safe reflective space where every NQSW is able to deal with issues of racism and other forms of oppressive or discriminatory behaviour, or of opportunities for learning and development in this area.

Evidence from the latest round of quality assurance visits further confirms the view

ASYE and other associated resources to invest in developing their workforce for the future. This is especially so where employers have found it difficult to recruit experienced social workers and have decided to use the ASYE as one part of their strategy to ensure they have the social workers they need.

There is significant evidence of the attention employers are giving to identifying potential recruits at the earliest opportunity. We hear of how they work in partnership with universities, offer student placements, adjust their recruitment cycle to invite students to apply for posts all of which is followed by clear investment in the ASYE and clear career development opportunities. We have come across many Supervisors who are starting to say ‘I did my ASYE here’, and are now supporting their new team members.

The development of academies supporting the learning and development of the whole workforce is also a key investment benefiting the ASYE. A number of employers have developed a more specific ‘ASYE academy’. Whatever the model this often provides additional support to NQSWs and the delivery of the ASYE.

Commonly, this included practice educator/facilitator roles who take responsibility for some or all of the ASYE assessment process and reflective supervision, working in partnership with team based supervisors who are responsible for the day to day work

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supervised and assessed by a single individual who is likely to be a team manager, deputy or senior practitioner.

Identification and selection of people to be assessors for the ASYE is equally inconsistent when looking at the whole, with some being recruited to dedicated roles at one extreme to it being ‘pot luck’ for a manager who happens to recruit an NQSW! Whilst many organisations strive to have all their assessors trained as practice educators, it is often the case that they do not have enough people with that training to meet all the demands of the ASYE alongside offering student placements. In child and family services ASYE assessors have often participated in the supervisor development programme funded by the DfE.

There is considerable commitment across the groups of assessors we have met through QA sessions to their NQSWs. Nevertheless, in most ASYE programmes more could be done to provide more support, ASYE related information and training specific to the role of assessor. In some cases assessors have themselves been asking for allocated time to devote to the tasks associated with the ASYE assessment. These findings align with the responses reported elsewhere from assessors attending the quarterly forum which clearly show that there is demand for more support, guidance and resources for those assessing and supervising NQSWs.

Key messages

Recommendations

1. ASYE programmes should monitor the quality assurance of their programmes

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