

**HR Procedure**

**Soulbury Structured Professional Assessment Procedure**

1. **Background**

Soulbury pay and conditions apply to a limited number of posts as described by the Soulbury Committee relating to educational improvement, educational psychologists and young people’s/ community service managers in Cumbria County Council.

The Soulbury Committee introduced the “Structured Professional Assessments” (SPA) system into the national Soulbury pay agreement from March 2001.

The SPA system provides Soulbury paid officers who meet the nationally agreed requirements with the opportunity to receive up to three extra points on top of their normal scales. There is no nationally agreed process for the implementation or administration of the SPA system. The following arrangements will therefore apply in Cumbria County Council.

1. **Eligibility**

The national Soulbury agreement sets out the following provisions with regard to eligibility:

* In order to be eligible for Structured Professional Assessment 1 (SPA 1) a Soulbury- paid officer must have had 4 or more years’ continuous service with one or more local authorities and in normal circumstances not less than 2 years continuous service in their current post.
* Authorities have the discretion in “exceptional circumstances” to consider applications from individual officers earlier than this. (see section 7 below)
* Applications for SPA 2 can be made one year after a successful application for SPA 1
* The award of a third SPA point will not be made until at least 2 years after having achieved the second SPA point. Early applications cannot be made for SPA 3.

1. **Assessment Process**

Structured Professional Assessments should be based on the officer’s range of duties, responsibilities and achievements against the agreed targets and objectives for the post and meet the assessment criteria below.

Only one application can be made in any one year. This needs to be prior to the appraisal meeting so that the application can be discussed and considered as part of the appraisal process.

Where an officer wants to be assessed they should notify the line manager in writing using the SPA application form (appendix one) setting out how they meet the criteria. The form should be submitted by the officer to the line manager prior to the appraisal meeting. The assessment will be appropriate to the level of post.

If approved the line manager should:

1. attach a copy of the completed SPA form to the appraisal document.
2. notify the service centre and attach a copy of the SPA form to the ticket so that this can be kept with the employee’s record.
3. **The Assessment Criteria**

SPA 1

Officers will need to meet all criteria listed below:

1. Development - officers must show that they are fully informed of the developments in specialism;
2. Developing the Service – officers must make a recognised contribution to the policy, planning and meeting of performance targets for their authority;
3. Improving Standards – Officers must make a recognised contribution to the improvement and evaluation of service delivery across all appropriate aspects of the authority’s functions;
4. Management and Administration – Officers must manage and assess resources to provide efficient delivery of services;
5. Equal Opportunities – officers must contribute to the development of the authority’s policies in improving access to their services in raising achievement levels for their communities.

SPA 2

Officers will need to show that they have made a sustained contribution to the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. This will be measured under the following headings:

1. Leadership and direction and;
2. Determining the shape and nature of the service including initiatives that improve service quality.

SPA 3

In meeting the criteria officers will have to demonstrate that their contribution is beyond that normally expected of their role. Officers will:

1. Need to demonstrate that they have made an exceptional contribution to the development of the service over a sustained period and;
2. Be involved in a programme of CPD focused on the requirements of the service and the aspirations of the officers for their own professional development.
3. **Timescales**

SPA assessments will be conducted at the end of the summer term with any resulting pay points being effective from the following 1 September.

1. **Appeals process**

In cases where an application for SPA points to be awarded has been unsuccessful or where an application for exceptional circumstances has been refused the applicant has the right to an appeal.

The applicant should set down in writing the grounds for appealing the decision within 5 working days and:

* In the case of a decision not to award the SPA point – send it to the Assistant Director Education and Skills.
* Where the exceptional circumstances have not been agreed - send it to the Director of People.

The officer will be given the opportunity to make representation in person and is entitled to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative.

The decision of the appeal will be given in writing and where the appeal is rejected will include the reason for the decision.

There is no further right of appeal.

1. **Exceptional circumstances**

Exceptional circumstances include where officers want to apply either:

* for assessment of SPA 1 before the completion of four years continuous service and/or two years continuous service in the current post or
* for assessment of SPA 2 before the completion of one year after the award of SPA 1.

Exceptional Circumstances do not apply to SPA 3 – an early application cannot be made for SPA 3.

Where officers feel that they have an exceptional case and should be included in the process, they must complete the application form, including the exceptional circumstances section, to their line manager for comment.

The line manager will provide a brief written comment on the case for exception and will then forward the information to the Assistant Director Education and Skills. This will ensure that a fair, consistent and meaningful assessment process is maintained for all.

The Assistant Director Education and Skills will consider the case for exception and provide a written reply to the applicant.

If successful the line manager will consider the application for progression as set out above (section 3).

If the case for exception is unsuccessful the applicant will have the right of appeal to the Director of People following the steps set out in 6 above.

**Appendix One**

Application for Structured Professional Assessment

**SPA 1 / SPA 2 / SPA 3\*** please delete as appropriate

**APPLICATION FOR STRUCTURED PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Personal Details

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Current Post Title |  |
| Date of Appointment to Soulbury Scale post |  |
| Date Appointed to Current Soulbury Post in Cumbria County Council |  |

**Application**

\*I wish to apply for an assessment within the Soulbury Scheme for Structured Professional Assessments and have detailed my evidence for this below.

\* I wish to apply for early consideration of the Soulbury Scheme for Structured Professional Assessments on the grounds set out below.

\*Please delete as appropriate.

Signature of Applicant ………………………………………………………………………………...

Date ……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<**

**Level 1**

The applicant must set out how they meet the following five criteria:

|  |
| --- |
| Development - officers must show that they are fully informed of the developments in specialism |
| Developing the Service – officers must make a recognised contribution to the policy, planning and meeting of performance targets for their authority |
| Improving Standards – Officers must make a recognised contribution to the improvement and evaluation of service delivery across all appropriate aspects of the authority’s functions |
| Management and Administration – Officers must manage and assess resources to provide efficient delivery of services |
| Equal Opportunities – officers must contribute to the development of the authority’s policies in improving access to their services in raising achievement levels for their communities |

**Level 2**

Officers will need to show that they have made a sustained contribution to the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. This will be measured under the following headings:

|  |
| --- |
| Leadership and direction |
| Determining the shape and nature of the service including initiatives that improve service quality |

**Level 3**

In meeting the criteria officers will have to demonstrate that their contribution is beyond that normally expected of their role. Officers will:

|  |
| --- |
| Need to demonstrate that they have made an exceptional contribution to the development of the service over a sustained period |
| Be involved in a programme of CPD focused on the requirements of the service and the aspirations of the officers for their own professional development |

**Outcome of Assessment**

……………………………………………………….. (name) has/has\* not met the criteria of the Soulbury Scheme for Structured Professional Assessments at the following level:

\*please dele as appropriate

Signed……………………………………………………………………………… Line manager

Date………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**Exceptional Circumstances**

Applicant to provide details of exceptional circumstances for consideration

|  |
| --- |
| Level of Application (1 or 2) and details of exceptional circumstances |
| Line Manager’s Comment |

**Outcome of Exceptional Circumstances Application**

Exceptional Circumstances Application by ……………………………………………… (name) has/has\* not been accepted.

\*please delete as appropriate

Signed………………………………………………………………………………

Assistant Director Education and Skills

Date………………………………………………………………………………………………..