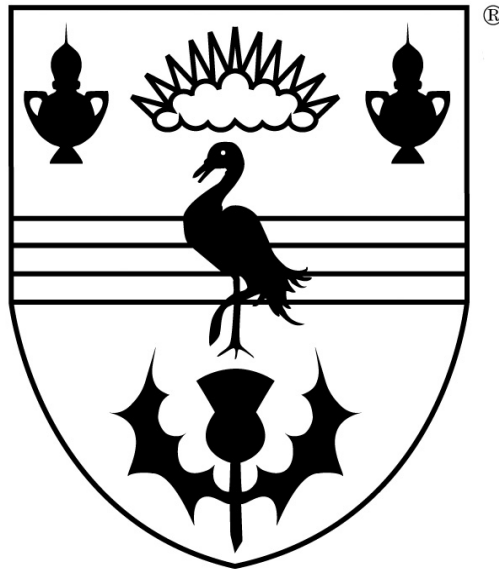


The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland



**Summary of
The Professional Practice Manual for Student/Graduate
Trainee Environmental Health Officers (EHOs)**

October 2023

This document provides a **condensed* version of the Professional Practice Manual which includes general requirements, core subject areas, details of the professional domains of competence and assessment procedures which require to be addressed by someone wishing to achieve the REHIS Diploma in Environmental Health.

*(The full comprehensive Manual describes in detail the training programme for student/graduate trainee EHOs consisting of a combination of practical training, portfolio development, and professional interviews. Student/Graduate trainees must refer to the Manual to fully understand the requirements of the training programme.)

(See Appendix 1)

The competence of an Environmental Health Officer is vital for ensuring application of appropriate interventions, in relation to core environmental health subjects, which seek to improve, protect and maintain public health. This can be achieved first, by looking at the four **Domains of Competence**, which are;

- 1.underpinning academic/technical knowledge,
- 2.application of academic/technical knowledge,
- 3.understanding of core concepts,
- 4.professional and ethical underpinnings.

The **Core Competencies** under points 1 and 2, include scientific knowledge, strategic awareness, observation/information gathering, risk analysis, asset development, solution-focused approach, and adherence to legislation and policies.

Additionally, knowledge and understanding of **Core concepts**, point 3 above, covers evaluative practice, sustainable development, environmental epidemiology, communication, collaborative working, and technical and conceptual public health challenges.

Professional and ethical underpinnings emphasise the need to recognise and address population and environmental health issues, while acting ethically and equitably, knowing your own competence limits, and committing to continuous personal and professional development.

Evidencing competence through a portfolio, ensures a modern, flexible, and engaged environmental health profession, prepared for future challenges.

The practical training element in total requires a *minimum* of 48 weeks and covers core subject areas of environmental health, including occupational health and safety, food safety, public health, pollution control, waste management, and more. The training is designed to develop a "generalist" EHO capable of working in any location and handling environmental health issues at a professional level.

During the training, the student/graduate trainee must develop the portfolio documenting their experiences and reflections. The portfolio should demonstrate their competence in *core subject areas*, understanding of *wider public health* skills, and adherence to *professional and ethical standards*.

After completing the training and receiving a successful outcome from their portfolio, candidates are eligible to present themselves for *professional interviews*. The interviews assess knowledge, problem-solving skills, and ability to apply environmental health principles in real-life situations.

The ultimate goal of the Scheme of Professional Practice is to produce skilled and adaptable Environmental Health Officers who can effectively protect and improve public health in various contexts.

General Skills (See Appendix 2)

This subject area covers essential aspects of the job, such as administration, record-keeping, and enforcement procedures that the student/graduate trainees need to understand and master during their practical training.

In this area of work, the student/graduate trainees will learn about the functions of Environmental Health in local government in Scotland and the responsibilities of various organisations involved. They will also understand the structure of local government in different regions of the UK and the roles of the Scottish Government. The trainees will differentiate between civil and criminal law, gaining insight into the legal aspects of their work.

Record-keeping is a crucial skill for EHOs. Trainees will learn how to identify and record relevant data accurately and comprehensively. They will be trained to collect information legally and handle it securely, adhering to data protection regulations.

The enforcement procedures section will equip the trainees with the knowledge and skills to take appropriate legal actions when necessary. They will learn about court procedures and how to identify activities that breach legislation. Trainees will understand how to investigate and gather evidence, negotiate for compliance, and monitor ongoing compliance. They will also learn about preparing cases for prosecution, presenting oral evidence professionally, and communicating outcomes effectively.

Overall, this area aims to prepare Student/Graduate Trainees with the essential knowledge and practical skills required to perform their roles effectively, ensuring the safety and well-being of the community.

Core Subject - Occupational Health & Safety

The Student/Graduate Trainee will partake in approximately 6-weeks training in occupational health and safety, focusing on legislation, inspections, interventions, and investigations. They will participate in workplace visits, conduct risk assessments, and prepare reports. The training covers various exposures, such as ergonomic, physical, chemical, biological, psychological, and social factors affecting health and safety. The trainee will also be involved in accident and complaint investigations and learn about appropriate enforcement options.

Core Subject - Food (Safety, Standards, Security)

There will be approximately 12-weeks training focussing on food safety, food standards, and food security in Scotland. The Student/Graduate Trainee will gain an understanding of relevant legislation, codes of practice, and national frameworks related to food. Practical training will include interventions in various food businesses, learning inspection techniques, risk assessment, and reporting outcomes. The trainee will also handle cases relating to food-related illnesses, investigate complaints, and understand import/export procedures. Additionally, the programme covers food law, sampling, surveillance, and the role of Food Standards Scotland. The goal is to prepare the trainee to contribute effectively to public health by ensuring safe and high-quality food practices.

Core Subject - Environmental Public Health

The Student/Graduate Trainee is expected to spend approximately 8 weeks learning about environmental public health. This includes understanding relevant legislation, powers, and national frameworks. The training involves practical experiences such as visits, inspections, and investigations related to various aspects of environmental public health, such as general health duties, infectious diseases, smoking in public places, water supply, swimming pools, animal welfare, pest control, sea and airport health, disinfection, and disposal of the dead. The Student/Graduate Trainee will develop skills in identifying and addressing public health issues and ensuring compliance with regulations to protect public well-being in various built and natural environments.

Core Subject -The Built Environment

The 6 weeks practical training in the built environment, focuses on various aspects of environmental health and public health. It covers legislation, inspections, and interactions with other services. Student/Graduate Trainees will learn about building defects, housing standards, planning, building standards, HMOs, caravan sites, registration of landlords, and environmental impact assessments. The training aims to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to address issues related to property defects, housing conditions, planning proposals, and their impact on public health.

Core Subject - Pollution Control

The Student/Graduate Trainee will spend approximately 8-weeks training on pollution control, with a focus on noise pollution, atmospheric pollution, contaminated land, bathing waters, and radiation monitoring. They will learn how to operate sound level monitoring equipment, investigate noise complaints, and participate in planning applications related to noise control. Additionally, they will understand air quality

monitoring, pollution prevention, and enforcement procedures for matters relating to pollution.

The Student/Graduate Trainee will be familiar with Contaminated land regulations, assessment methods, and remediation options. They will gain knowledge about bathing water quality requirements and potential health risks. The training will cover radiation monitoring, sources of radiation, and methods to measure radon gas.

The Student/Graduate Trainee will also gain insights into the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) activities, including its role in enforcing regulations, working with other organisations, and maintaining public registers of authorised activities. Overall, the training aims to equip the trainee with essential skills and knowledge to contribute to pollution control and public health agendas.

Core Subject -Waste Management

The waste management training for the Student/Graduate Trainee spans about 4-weeks and covers various aspects of waste management and its role in public health. It includes understanding waste categories, waste minimisation techniques, waste recycling principles, waste collection methods, handling special waste, waste treatment and disposal processes, waste regulation, street cleansing, litter control, dealing with abandoned vehicles, public conveniences, sewage treatment, and the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund. The programme aims to equip the trainee with knowledge of legislation, best practices, and practical experiences in waste management to contribute effectively to environmental health and public welfare.

Wider Public Health

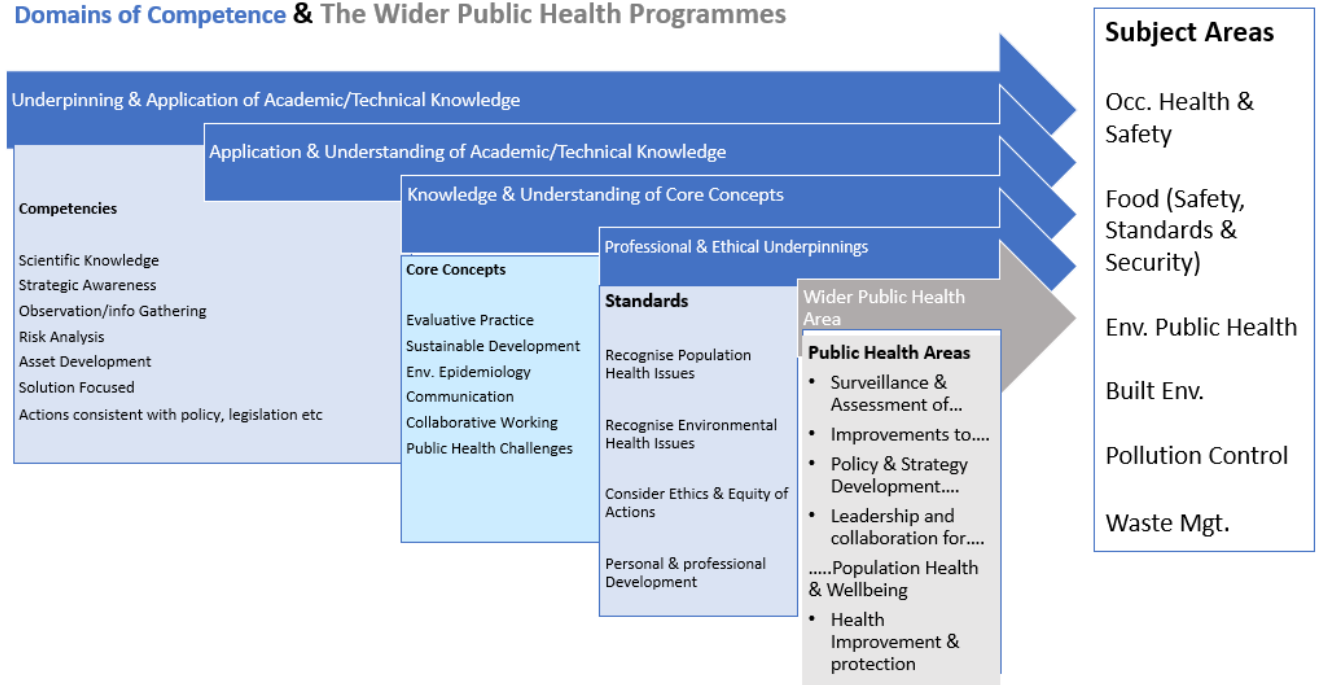
Public health is the science and art of promoting, protecting, and improving the health and well-being of the population. EHOs play a significant role in public health. As part of their training, Student/Graduate Trainees spend around 4-weeks in wider public health activities, learning how core environmental health functions contribute to public health goals. This includes time with various health teams and organisations, understanding partnership arrangements between local authorities and the NHS, and being aware of environmental health surveillance systems and other organisations involved in protecting and improving public health.

The Student/Graduate Trainee should participate in multi-disciplinary environments to improve public health. They must understand the links between environmental health policy and national/local public health policy and contribute to policy development. Additionally, they should be aware of the role of environmental health in various national agendas. The trainee should understand how policies are implemented and monitored to improve public health. They must communicate changes in legislation and policy effectively to relevant organisations and individuals in the public health field. Reflective practice should be applied to evaluate procedures and outcomes and to develop a holistic viewpoint. The portfolio should demonstrate competence in various public health areas, showcasing the trainee's skills and understanding.

Appendix 1

Relationship Between Domains of Competence, Competencies, Concepts, Subject Areas, and The Wider Public Health Agenda

Domains of Competence & The Wider Public Health Programmes



Appendix 2

Table Showing Approximate Time Period for Training

Main Subject	Specific Subject	Brief Description	Approximate time period of training
General	Applies to all programme areas	Admin, enforcement procedures, record keeping	6 weeks
Industry & Commerce	Occupational Health & safety	Inspection/intervention of workplaces, occupational exposures Accident & complaint investigation, enforcement	6 weeks
Industry & Commerce	Food (Safety, Standards, & Security)	Food law interventions, food law, places subject to approval, illness, sampling, import/export of food, complaints, food alerts etc	12 weeks
Built & Natural Environment	Env Public Health	General health duties, communicable disease, water supply, animal welfare, swimming pools, pest control, disposal of the dead etc	8 weeks
Built & Natural Environment	The Built Environment	Building defects, housing standards, building standards, planning, HMOs, EIAs, landlord registration, caravan sites etc	6 weeks
Built & Natural Environment	Pollution Control	Noise pollution, anti-social behaviour, air pollution, contaminated land, bathing waters, radiation, SEPA activities etc	8 weeks
Built & Natural Environment	Waste Management	Waste types-recycling, minimisation, collection, special waste, treatment & disposal, regulation, litter, flytipping, abandoned vehicles, sewage treatment & disposal, landfills etc	4 weeks
Wider Public Health (rather than a core subject, wider public health exists as a theme straddling all core subject areas)	Public Health	Surveillance & Assessment of Population Health & Wellbeing Assessing effectiveness of interventions to improve Population's Health & Wellbeing, Policy & Strategy Development & Implementation/Leadership & Collaborative working for Population Health & Wellbeing, Health Improvement & Protection. (every criteria above needs to be evidenced)	4 weeks

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