

Starting a Peer / Lived Experience Role



Accepting an offer in a Peer Support or Lived Experience role is for many both an exciting and daunting experience. To guide you through this process below are a few steps and insights on what to expect.

OFFER STAGE

Most volunteering and paid roles start with a conditional offer and first require necessary recruitment checks to be completed. These are likely to include reference checks, Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks and sometimes an organisational risk assessment. For more information on this check out the guides in the resources section.

These checks can take a few weeks to complete and will require ID verification as part of the process.

Most organisations will require all these checks to be completed and signed off before issuing a start date / contract.

It's important to read through your contract as this will include the terms and conditions and expectations of the role.

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INDUCTION & ONBOARDING

During your first few weeks your supervisor will go through the organisations induction procedure which will likely include:

- Organisational overviews on the services they provide
- Introduction to the office, systems and wider team
- Important organisational policies and procedures
- Overview of the role, duties and objectives

This can be a lot of information to take in, so most organisations spread this out over a period of a few weeks and blend it with job shadowing experienced team members while you complete their essential learning.

It is unlikely you will be given a caseload of clients to support for the first couple of weeks as it is vital you have completed all the training modules and are made aware of organisational safeguarding and code of conduct policies for both your safety and the safety of the clients you will be working with.

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PROBATION PERIODS

All employers generally include a probation period when starting a new role. A probation period is for new employees to understand their role, evaluate their compatibility with the company, and identify areas for improvement.

Your employment contracts should have an explicit probation clause, which covers the duration, requirements, potential extension and termination condition of employment during probationary periods.

During your probationary period you will be expected to complete all of the mandatory training and demonstrate that the role is a right fit for you.

The timescales of probationary periods vary between employers, but generally these are 6 months in duration.

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ONGOING TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

In support of continued professional development employers will provide ongoing training to their teams in the forms of e-learning modules, internal and external training sessions.

Many also now offer professional mentoring to learn new skills and help progress your career.

Your supervisor will help you identify any training needs as part of an appraisal process.