EVE
The Opportunity Network

EASTERN VOCATIONAL ENTERPRISES LIMITED

Applications for Service Handbook

2005

Contents

Acknowledgments

This handbook has been developed as a result of a process of extensive consideration consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

The Applications for Service Working Group would like to acknowledge the generous response of managers, participants and referrers in assisting with the analysis and revision of this process.

The members of the Working Group are participants and staff representatives from training and occupational services of the EVE Limited service network and from the Rehabilitation Training & Guidance service of the Health Service Executive (Northern Area).

All members gave unselfishly of their valuable time in an attempt to improve, where appropriate, the ways in which the applications for service system is operated for Training and Occupational Services and demonstrated a tremendous commitment to ensure that applicants receive a quality service that is both professional and respectful.

Note: Clubhouses within EVE have devised their own application system that is consistent with their service ethos.

Tom O'Brien
(Chairperson)
Senior Psychologist

Working Group Members

Tom O'Brien (Chairperson)

Therese Malone (Participant from Training Centre)

Pam McKay (Manager, Applications for Service)

Brendan Sharpe (Rehabilitation Training Guidance Officer)

Helena Jones (Staff member from Occupational Services)

Susan Harrington (Staff member from Training Centre)

Noel Brady (Participant from Occupational Services)

Colm Grogan (Staff member from Training Centre) resigned

Liam ????? (Participant from Training Centre) resigned

Sharon Sheridan (Staff member from Training Centre) resigned

Introduction

The effective processing of applications for service to E.V.E. is a vital component of the organisation's service delivery. While the issues surrounding this process have always been complex, they are now also occurring in the context of significant change in the rehabilitation service landscape. These changes include statutory and legislative reform, the mainstreaming of the disability agenda and more progressive and challenging ways of thinking about the service provider-service user relationship.

Administration personnel and the Advisory Team have played an extremely valuable function in processing applications over the years. It is now timely to re-visit the current roles, functions, procedures and practices associated with these arrangements in order to ensure continued best practice.

As part of a wider series of organisational projects commencing in 2003, the Working Team was established to examine the issues surrounding applications for service to EVE.

The Purpose of the Working Group

The Terms of Reference of the Working Group (Ref: Appendix 1) were to:
To review the ways in which E.V.E. Limited processes applications for service with a view to optimising quality service provision.

The following Objectives were set:
- To review current arrangements regarding the processing of applications for service.
- To consider the impact of statutory, legislative and service provision changes on the applications for service process.
- To produce a comprehensive framework that will address the issues identified and provide clear guidelines on practice.

The Working Group used the Methodology below to achieve its objectives:
1. Agree the Terms of Reference at the Centre Managers meeting and Call for nominations.
2. Select the appropriate Working Group membership
3. Agree a Work Plan, its constituent Key Areas and the methodology required to process the objectives of the Working Group
4. Design a framework and clear guidelines on practice associated with the Key Areas.
5. Circulate the first draft document to relevant stakeholders for comment
6. Identify and communicate to the Management Team additional resources that may be required to execute the recommendations of the Working Group
7. Circulate the second draft document to relevant stakeholders for comment
8. Produce final agreed document.
9. Communicate to the Management Team significant issues that may arise from the work of the Team but which are outside the remit of the Team

Key Revisions to the Applications for Service Process

A number of key changes in EVE's overall applications for service process for Training and Occupational Services have been executed by the Working Group in the following areas:

1   Revision of Application documentation:

The Working Group agreed that in order for the revised application documentation to be considered a success, it would need to be clear, attractive, accessible and comprehensive in format; be based upon genuine consultation with all stakeholders and reflect an open and respectful relationship between the applicant and the staff of EVE. The application documents have now been extensively revised on the basis of these principles.

2   Revision of Person Centred Planning system:

The revision of the Person Centred Planning system was undertaken by the Working Group on foot of a wider organisational requirement and feedback from service participants. At an organisational level, the Group were keen to contribute towards the development of an integrated and seamless model of service from the application stage onwards. The opportunity for applicants to self-assess his/her goals and needs was reported by service participants to be an important empowerment opportunity. An applicant now has the opportunity at this initial point to outline the Life Domains in which he/she wishes to be supported while involved with EVE services.

3   Revision of role, format and resourcing of Advisory Team:

Traditionally the majority of referrals have been made to local centres based upon the relationship that exists between referrers and the centre. In addition, geographical proximity has proven to be an important consideration for applicants. It is anticipated that this arrangement will continue to be the case for the majority of persons.

While the current set up has served the organisation well, it is proposed that the opportunity to increase the Advisory Team's skill level and the opportunity to practice these skills more frequently along side other members of the Advisory Team will assist this process. A two-year term is suggested as a way of ensuring that other Managers/ Supervisors in Charge have an opportunity to build up their skills and also that serving members are not overburdened. It is envisaged that the overall impact of this development will be to increase the overall skill level of Managers/ Supervisors in Charge within the organisation over a number of years.

The Advisory Team will be employed predominantly for applications in which:
1. Issues surrounding the application are complex and need careful consideration
2. The referrer does not have a relationship with a particular centre
3. The referrer would value additional evaluation of the application
4. The referral to the local centre is not considered suitable to meet the needs of the applicant

Makeup of the Advisory Team Panel

The Advisory Team will be re-constituted as follows:
1. 4 Centre Managers/Supervisors-in-Charge will be appointed to the Advisory Team panel to serve a 2-year term
2. The manager (Application for Service) will serve as a member of the Advisory Team panel on an ongoing basis
3. Additional training and development opportunities will be provided for these Managers e.g. Certificate in Adult Guidance and Counselling (NUI Maynooth)
4. Representatives from the Rehabilitative Training & Guidance Services will be invited to form part of the Advisory Team panel
5. The Advisory Team will continue to be located in Emmet House due its central location

Makeup of Individual Advisory Teams

1. The Advisory Team will be brawn from two members of the Advisory Team panel.
2. The Advisory Team will meet on a fortnightly basis. On this basis, each panel member will be required for c.6 events per year.
3. In so far as possible, the Advisory Team will be mixed on the basis of gender, service type e.g. training, occupational, clubhouse etc. and level of experience.

4   Revision of Risk Assessment procedures:

In recent times, the Participant Support Service has been expanded its role and expertise in the area of risk assessment. The organisation recognises that in order to fulfil its role as a service provider, it needs, where appropriate, to obtain relevant additional information on individual applicant's life situation and experience that can assist the application and placement decision-making process. The procedures for processing applications in which one or more items have been ticked in the Problem Behaviour checklist of the Confidential Medical Report are set out in the flowcharts.

5 **Revision of procedural arrangements:**

A flowchart system has been employed to describe and illustrate the decision making process required of local Centre Managers and the Advisory Team at the various stages of the application for service process.

The process involves three major stages as follows:
• Application and Administration
• Interview
• Interview Outcome

A series of flowcharts are presented which hopefully are sufficiently self-evident to eliminate the need for additional textual information. Specific issues are elaborated upon below under the relevant Stage.

The Stages of the Applications for Service Process

Stage 1 → **Application Process**

Stage 2 → **Interview Process**

Stage 3 → **Interview Outcome Process**
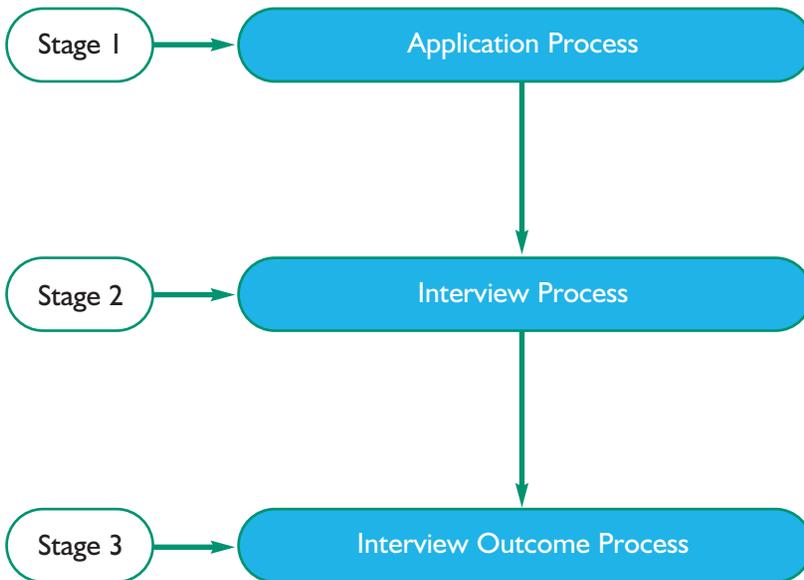
Stage 1

Application Process

Application (Part 1)

Application received by Centre Manager (CM)

Date Stamped

Documentation Complete?

Yes → **Application appropriate for EVE service (e.g. meets EVE services profile)?**

No → Contact applicant and/or referrer → Complete Documentation →

Yes / **No** → Centre Manager contacts referrer/application

Application appropriate for centre (e.g. meets EVE service profile)?

Yes

Risk Assessment (RA) required?

No → Send to Manager (Applics.) → Advisory Team

Centre Manager discusses Requirement for R.A. with Participant Support Service (PSS) → **R.A. required?**

Yes → R.A. conducted: link with Area Manager

No → CM writes to applicant offering interview

Applicant can proceed?

PSS Personnel liaises with Manager (Applics.) & Applicant/Referrer ← **No**

Yes

Stage 1

Application (Part 2)

Write to applicant offering interview

Applicant attends?

Yes

No

Write to applicant again

Applicant Attends?

Yes

No

Interview takes place
(See Stage 2)

Contact applicant/referrer establish difficulty with attendance

Interview Outcome
(See Stage 3)

Applicant decides to proceed?

Invited to interview

Yes

No

Take off list and advise applicant/referrer in writing

Archive application documentation/ return?

Addressing Clinical Supports and Professional Reports

1   Requirement for External Clinical Supports:

EVE services work closely with local community mental health and learning disability service teams who refer applicants and are in a position to provide clinical supports to service participants, when required. General Practitioners who refer applicants are requested to ensure that they are in a similar position to provide clinical supports or alternatively to nominate a key person who can act in this capacity.

2   Dealing with Professional Reports:

In the event that a professional report e.g. Psychological, Occupational Therapy etc. accompanies the application documentation, the local Centre Manager or Advisory Team can, if needed, discuss the contents with the relevant Participant Support Service personnel.

Professional reports are usually subject to restricted circulation and are provided for specific purposes. In the application for service context, they are provided to assist the decision making process in determining the 'best fit' between the requirements and characteristics of the applicant and the service options available.

3   Circumstances in which Reports should be sought:

In considering a person's application for service, every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that all relevant information is considered. If the local Centre Manager or the Advisory Team in meeting with the person applying for a service believe that the decision making process can best be assisted by additional information, contact should be made with Participant Support Service personnel. The PSS personal can then request copies of professional reports that are already available or request other additional information.

As with the application documentation, professional reports should be treated with due respect and the contents kept confidential to those directly involved in the application process.

Stage 2

Application & Administration Advisory Team Route (Part 1)

↓

Advisory team members advised of date and time

↓

Advise receptionist of interviewee names

↓

Room is Set up

↓

Tea/Coffee arranged

↓

Interviewers meet and agree roles for interviews

↓

Application documentation reviewed in good time

↓

Receptionist contacts interviewers with applicants name upon arrival

↓

Applicants greeted by interviewers and offered tea/coffee during wait for interview

↓

Add on all chart* from local centre/Advisory Team route (Stage 2 (Part 2))

Stage 2

Interview Process (Part 2)

Local Centre/Advisory Team Routes

Stage of Process	Application Documentation Reviewed	Style of Process

Interview Introduction

*Interview starts with greeting and outline of purpose and structure of meeting

- Welcoming
- Informal
- Empathic
- Open
- Respectful

Exploration

Exploration of Application
- Goals
- History
- Abilities/Successes
- Interests
- Resources
- Support needs

- Use of open and closed questions
- Straight forward language
- One question at a time

Decision Making

Fit exists between applicant requirements and centre(s) provision?

- Collaborative decision making
- Funnelling information

Yes

No

- Person interested in pursuing placement
- Place availability
- Funding status
- Willingness to travel
- Clinical backup

Advice Referrer & Manager (applicants)

Wrap up

Recap on interview discussion and decisions made

Key Factors in the Interview Process

The face-to-face interview between the service provider and applicant for service is a critical first point of contact occasion. Traditionally, the organisation have used the term 'chat' to help reduce the level of apprehension that is often experienced by applicants and it recommended that this term or similar terms be retained. It is proposed that the purpose of the conversation is to exchange information between the local Centre Manager or Advisory Team and the applicant with a view to facilitating a mutually agreed outcome concerning placement.

Saunders et al (1997) have identified a number of key factors that need to be considered in the interview process.

Validity
Does the interview do what it is intended to do?
- If an interviewee gives the answers that he/she believes the interviewer wants to hear then are we getting a clear picture and will this influence our decisions?
- Is the interviewee nervous? Will this affect his/her participation in the interview?
- Does the applicant agree with the decision to apply for service?

Reliability
The interviewer must ask the question: "would alternative interviewers reveal similar information?"

The interview area to be sufficiently standard in format to ensure critical information is exchanged while being flexible enough to reflect the uniqueness of each interview.

Interviewer Bias:
- Interviewer needs to avoid imposing his/her own beliefs through the questions they ask and through his/her Interpretation of responses

Interviewee Bias:
- Interviewee may not wish to disclose sensitive information and/or may only give partial picture.
- Interviewee may respond to questions in a manner that he/she feels would be socially acceptable/pleasing to the interviewer

The following points may be considered in our efforts to overcome bias and as such increase the reliability and validity of the interview:

- Good preparation and readiness for the interview;
- The quality of information supplied to the interviewee;
- The appropriateness of interviewer appearance at the interview;
- The nature of the opening comments to be made when the interview commences;
- The approach to questioning;
- The impact of interviewer behaviour during the course of the interview;
- The ability to demonstrate attentive listening skills;
- The scope to test understanding;
- The approach to recording information.

(Adapted from Saunders; Lewis and Thornhill, 1997)

Stage 3

**Interview Outcome Process
Local Centre/Advisory Team Route**

The flowcharts outline a number of possible scenarios that may arise and the recommended courses of action.
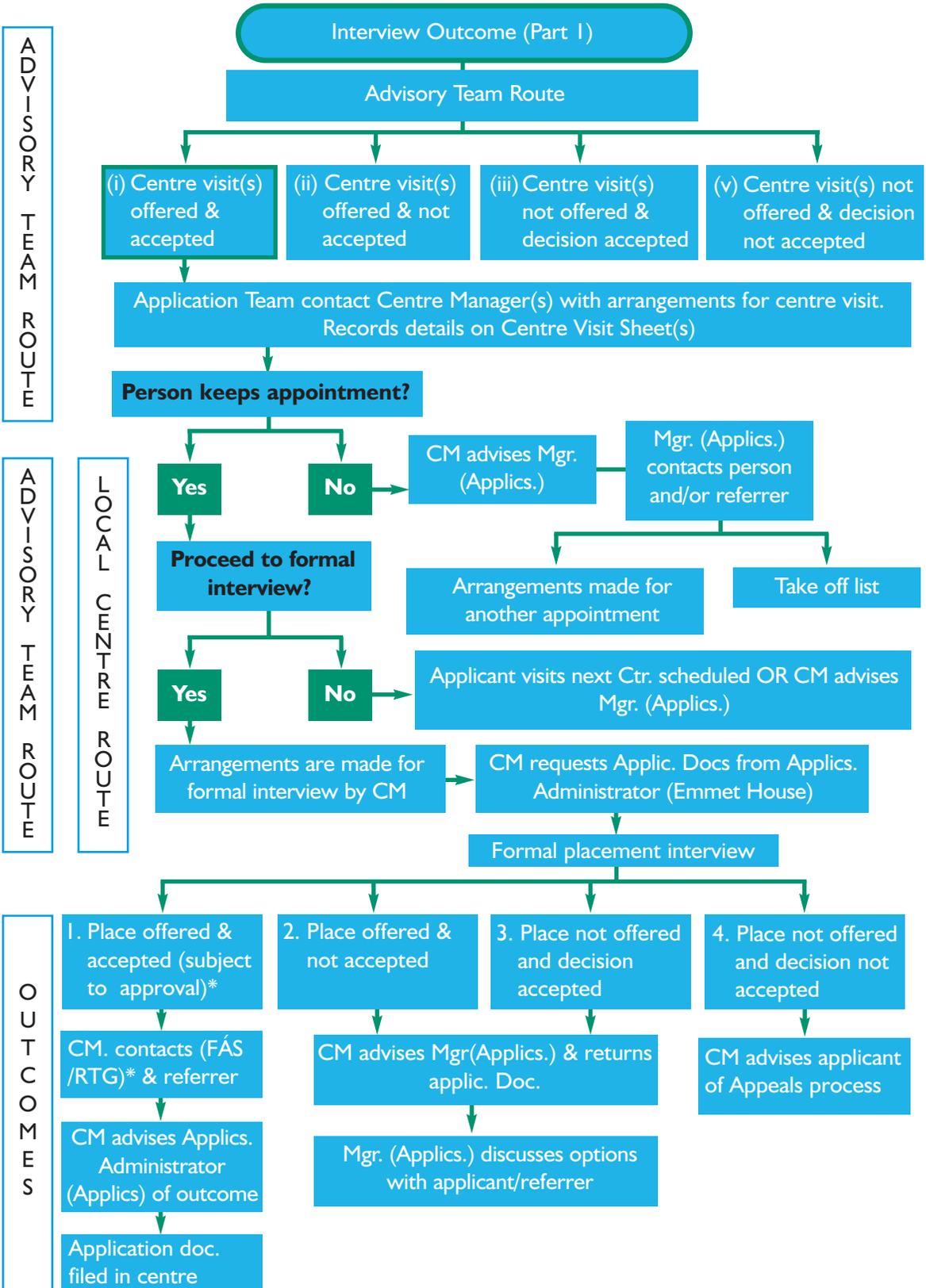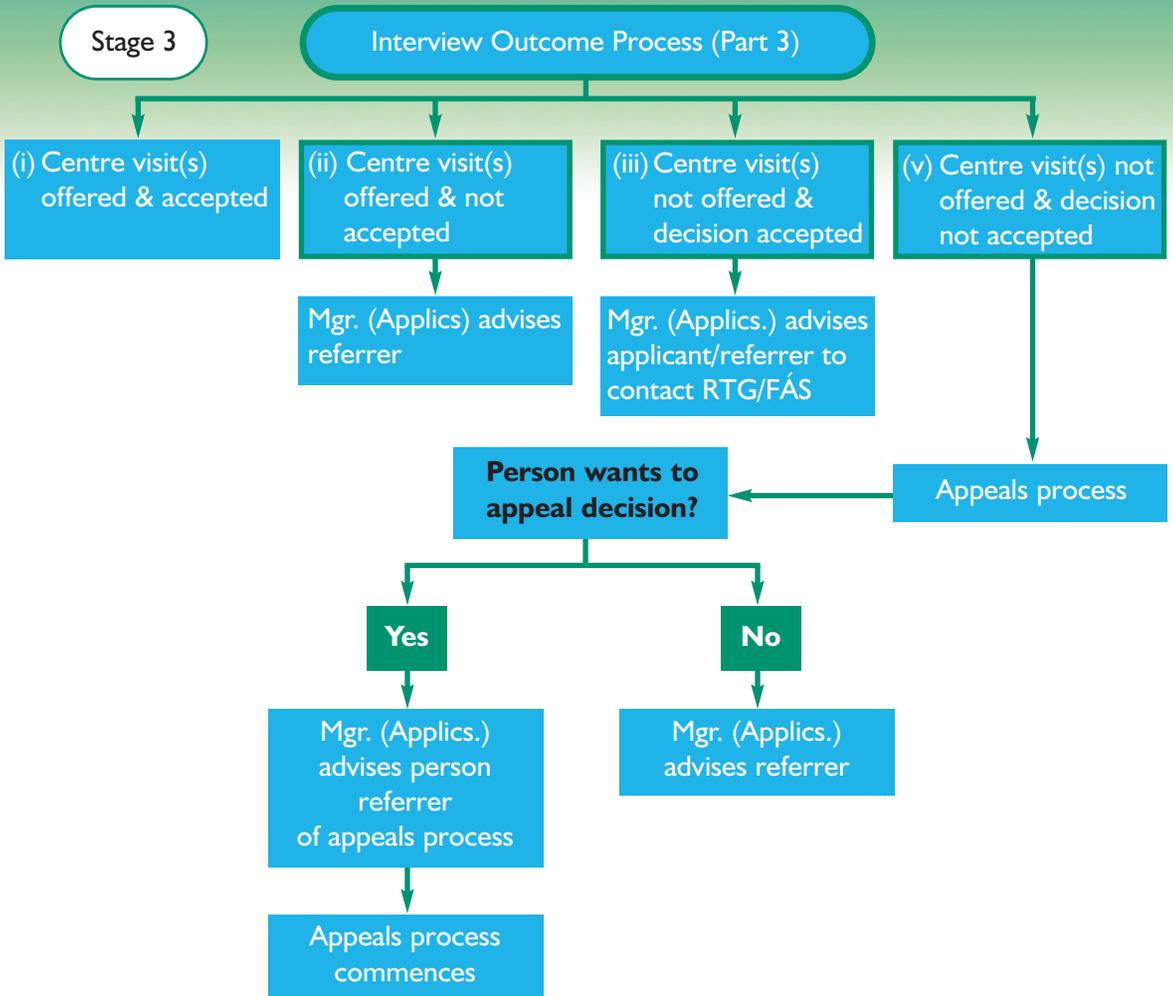
Advisory Team Route:

Scenario 1: Advisory Team offer centre visit(s) and Applicant agrees
Scenario 2: Advisory Team offer centre visit(s) and Applicant disagrees with offers
Scenario 3: Advisory Team does not offer a centre visit(s) and the Applicant agrees
Scenario 4: Advisory Team does not offer a centre visit(s) and the Applicant does not agree

ADVISORY TEAM ROUTE

ADVISORY TEAM ROUTE

LOCAL CENTRE ROUTE

OUTCOMES

Interview Outcome (Part 1)

Advisory Team Route

(i) Centre visit(s) offered & accepted

(ii) Centre visit(s) offered & not accepted

(iii) Centre visit(s) not offered & decision accepted

(v) Centre visit(s) not offered & decision not accepted

Application Team contact Centre Manager(s) with arrangements for centre visit. Records details on Centre Visit Sheet(s)

Person keeps appointment?

Yes — No → CM advises Mgr. (Applics.) — Mgr. (Applics.) contacts person and/or referrer

Proceed to formal interview?

Arrangements made for another appointment

Take off list

Yes — No → Applicant visits next Ctr. scheduled OR CM advises Mgr. (Applics.)

Arrangements are made for formal interview by CM → CM requests Applic. Docs from Applics. Administrator (Emmet House)

Formal placement interview

1. Place offered & accepted (subject to approval)*

2. Place offered & not accepted

3. Place not offered and decision accepted

4. Place not offered and decision not accepted

CM. contacts (FÁS/RTG)* & referrer

CM advises Mgr(Applics.) & returns applic. Doc.

CM advises applicant of Appeals process

CM advises Applics. Administrator (Applics) of outcome

Mgr. (Applics.) discusses options with applicant/referrer

Application doc. filed in centre

Stage 3 — Interview Outcome Process (Part 3)

(i) Centre visit(s) offered & accepted

(ii) Centre visit(s) offered & not accepted

(iii) Centre visit(s) not offered & decision accepted

(v) Centre visit(s) not offered & decision not accepted

Mgr. (Applics) advises referrer

Mgr. (Applics.) advises applicant/referrer to contact RTG/FÁS

Appeals process

Person wants to appeal decision?

Yes

No

Mgr. (Applics.) advises person referrer of appeals process

Mgr. (Applics.) advises referrer

Appeals process commences

Advisory Team Arrangements for Centre Visits

In order to make the recommended visit(s) to EVE centres more accessible, each applicant will be provided with:

- EVE Centre Map outlining the geographical location(s) of the relevant EVE Ltd., centre(s)
- Copy of the relevant EVE Centre Profile page(s), outlining centre details and incorporating an EVE Centre Visit Card- detailing the visit arrangements (Ref. Appendix 4)
- The Mgr. (Applic. for Service) records the progress of each person's application on the Advisory Team Applicants Tracking Sheet (Ref. Appendix 3)
- The Advisory Team record the details of interview schedule and outcomes on the Applicant Interview Record Sheet (Ref. Appendix 4)

Formal letter of offer inc. setting out of content of programme/inputs that can be provided within centre etc. in order to make clear parameters of input and where additional services are required

For the sake of clarity, it is important that the person should be made aware that the proposed visit is not in itself an offer of a place. Only the Centre Manager of the visited centre, in consultation with the person, can offer a place.

In the event that the person requires assistance with transport, the Advisory Team should discuss this issue with the person and suggest that a companion e.g. family member, friend, health professional accompany the person.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Terms of reference

Applications for Service Working Team

Introduction:
The effective processing of applications for service to E.V.E. is a vital component of the organisation's service delivery. While the issues surrounding this process have always been complex, they are now also occurring in the context of significant change in the rehabilitation service landscape. These changes include recent statutory and legislative reform, the mainstreaming of the disability agenda and more progressive and challenging ways of thinking about the service provider-service user relationship.

Administration personnel and the Advisory Team have played an extremely valuable function in processing applications over the years. It is now timely to re-visit the current roles, functions, procedures and practices associated with these arrangements in order to ensure best practice.

The Working Team will be established to examine the issues surrounding applications for service to EVE. The Terms of Reference, Objectives, Methodology, Team composition and Timeframe are set out below.

Terms of Reference:
To review the ways in which E.V.E. Limited processes applications for service with a view to optimising quality service provision.

Objectives:
1. To review current arrangements regarding the processing of applications for service.
2. To consider the impact of statutory, legislative and service provision changes on the applications for service process.
3. To produce a comprehensive framework that will address the issues identified and provide clear guidelines on practice.

Methodology:
1. Agree the Terms of Reference at the Centre Managers meeting and Call for nominations
2. Select the appropriate Working Team membership
3. Agree a Work Plan, its constituent Key Areas and the methodology required to process the objectives of the Team
4. Design a framework and clear guidelines on practice associated with the Key Areas.
5. Circulate the first draft document to relevant stakeholders for comment
6. Identify and communicate to the Senior Management Team additional resources that may be required to execute the recommendations of the Working Team
7. Circulate the second draft document to relevant stakeholders for comment
8. Produce final agreed document.
9. Communicate to the Management Team significant issues that may arise from the work of the Team but which are outside the remit of the Team