**GROW Procedure**

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**Approved by:** Care and Support Executive Team

**Lead Director:** Director of Business Development

**In consultation with:** Operational teams, Customers

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## **1. Procedural Context**

Riverside is committed to supporting and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. As part of that commitment, we have proactively created employment opportunities for people with lived experience to improve and enrich the services we provide.

From 2010 to 2018, the GROW programme had over 100 enrolees, with over 50% going on to secure permanent employment within Riverside.

Our workforce has been enhanced by the unique perspective and experiences of GROW colleagues over the years. In 2018, we spoke to colleagues from across the group, including current and former participants in the GROW programme to hear their views, identify improvements and increase the number of GROW roles across the group.

Following these discussions, we introduced changes to create a simple, flexible programme with clear guidelines and additional support for GROW Trainees and managers, including the introduction of GROW Mentor and GROW Champion roles in each region.

## **2. Definitions**

**Lived Experience**

Our definition of ‘Lived Experience’ allows us to create employment opportunities for a wide range of people. The definition is:

“*Lived experience of homelessness, worklessness or of receiving mental health services”*

**GROW Trainee**

The GROW Trainee role is a 15-month position, paid at Minimum Wage and comes with the requirement to complete a Level 2 qualification.

The role is aimed at people with little or no experience of work. The role provides them with structured training and support enabling them to gain the skills they need to move on to permanent employment.

**Lived Experience Roles**

The Lived Experience role is aimed at people with experience of homelessness, worklessness or of receiving mental health services who already have the qualifications, training or skills to take on an entry-level role.

## **3. Our Processes**

As part of approach to GROW we have a simple set of guidelines enabling staff to better understand the roles and support them in being able to recruit for these roles where appropriate.

**Any managers recruiting for a GROW role should follow the processes set out in The Riverside GROW Managers Guide.**

The guide is updated annually and can be found on the GROW RIC Page:

*RIC > Central Services > Care and Support > GROW*

## **4. Training**

To complement the mandatory staff training, additional training is available to provide support to those with limited work experience. The GROW training playlist can be found in Learning Bites and is split into 3 sections. It provides additional information and skills to meet the needs of the GROW Trainee as they develop in their role.

GROW Training can also be accessed through a [Remote Learning Portal](https://riverside-riversideexternal.sabacloud.com/Saba/Web_wdk/EU2PRD0013/index/prelogin.rdf?bdr=true) before an Employee Number has been issued and accessed through any device. New GROW Trainees can either choose to complete these courses in their own time at home, or can be used as a way to ease the transition into the workplace by completing them at their new place of work.

## **5. Additional Support**

**GROW Mentors**

The GROW Trainee role benefits from additional support from a GROW Mentor. Mentors will often be a graduate from the GROW programme themselves and can provide impartial advice and support to help GROW Trainees with the transition into employment.

**GROW Champions**

Regional GROW Champion roles have been created to support the GROW offer. GROW Champions manage the GROW mentor offer, are an advocate for the programme, and feed into the GROW Network meetings.

**GROW Network**

GROW Mentors and Champions also form part of a network which meet annually to support the development of the programme. They also have a Yammer page to share experiences, best practice, and connect with other GROW colleagues from across the Regions.