

Signing Off, Workflow and Unlocking Exemplars in ICS

Exemplars should be 'signed off' by using the **Sign Now** buttons in the **Status** panel

The purpose of this is threefold:

- Firstly when the **Sign Now** button is clicked, a check will be made to ensure all mandatory questions have been answered – this is vital for good data quality, for directorate performance monitoring reports and for the statutory returns that are made to central government from ICS
- Secondly, it ensures good management supervision of work added to ICS, as both Social Workers and Managers will sign off exemplars. It is important that Managers sign off exemplars in a timely manner, as it will be the second sign off date that determines if a piece of work (i.e. an Initial Assessment) is completed within timescales. E.g. If an Initial Assessment is completed within 7 days, but the Manager does not sign off the exemplar on ICS on the completed date, the assessment will be considered as out of timescales
- Thirdly, once signed off, the exemplar is locked, ensuring good data integrity and that a proper history of decisions made and work undertaken is maintained

Access to the **Sign Now** button is controlled through the team structure permissions – the **first sign off** should be done by the professional completing the exemplar – the **second sign off** can be done by a relevant Manager: Senior Practitioners, Practice Supervisors, Team Leaders, District Managers or Principal Social Workers.

Workflow messages can be used to facilitate the process of advising managers that an exemplar is ready for review and sign off.

In the event of mistakes being made, a signed off exemplar can be **unlocked** by users with the required permissions (all admin, social workers & relevant managers) – this creates a **Version 2** of the exemplar (which is not considered a duplicate), and will only contain data from the original exemplar. **Version 2** can then be edited as required. The original version is retained on the Chronology. An exemplar can be unlocked multiple times, however, performance monitoring reports and statutory returns will take the latest version counter sign off date as being when the piece of work was completed.

PLEASE NOTE: This guide just covers the functionality of how to sign off, workflow and if necessary, unlock exemplars. For roles and responsibilities and a process flowchart please see the guide '**A Practitioners Guide to Quality Assurance, Workflow and Signoff**' published by Policy (included at the end of this guide)

Exemplar is completed, checked then signed off

1
Relevant professional completes and/or checks exemplar and clicks first **Sign Now**

Please note: This step does not have to be done at the point of exemplar completion. A manager or relevant senior could review and check the exemplar first, and then the professional could sign the exemplar off

2
Any unanswered mandatory questions will be displayed here
Double click on the message to see it (and any other messages) in full

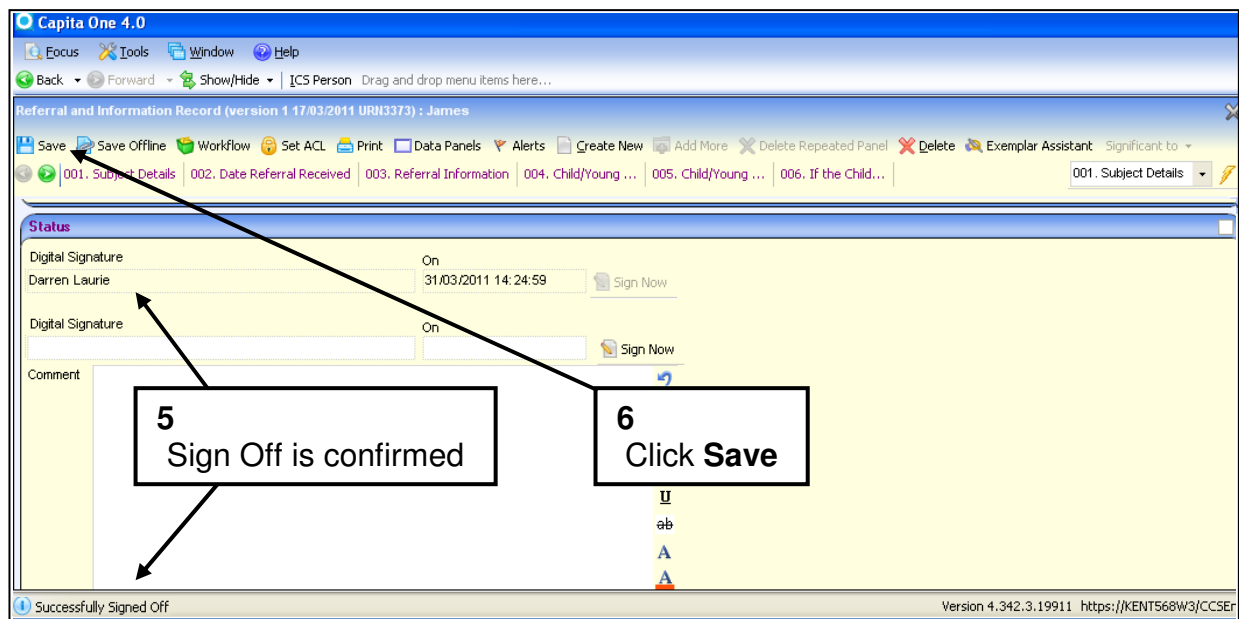
Hint:
The **Exemplar Assistant** can be used to check unanswered questions

*'Relationship to the Child / Young Person.' is mandatory and must be answered before sign off can occur.....

3
Complete any unanswered questions and click **Save**

4
Click **Sign Now**

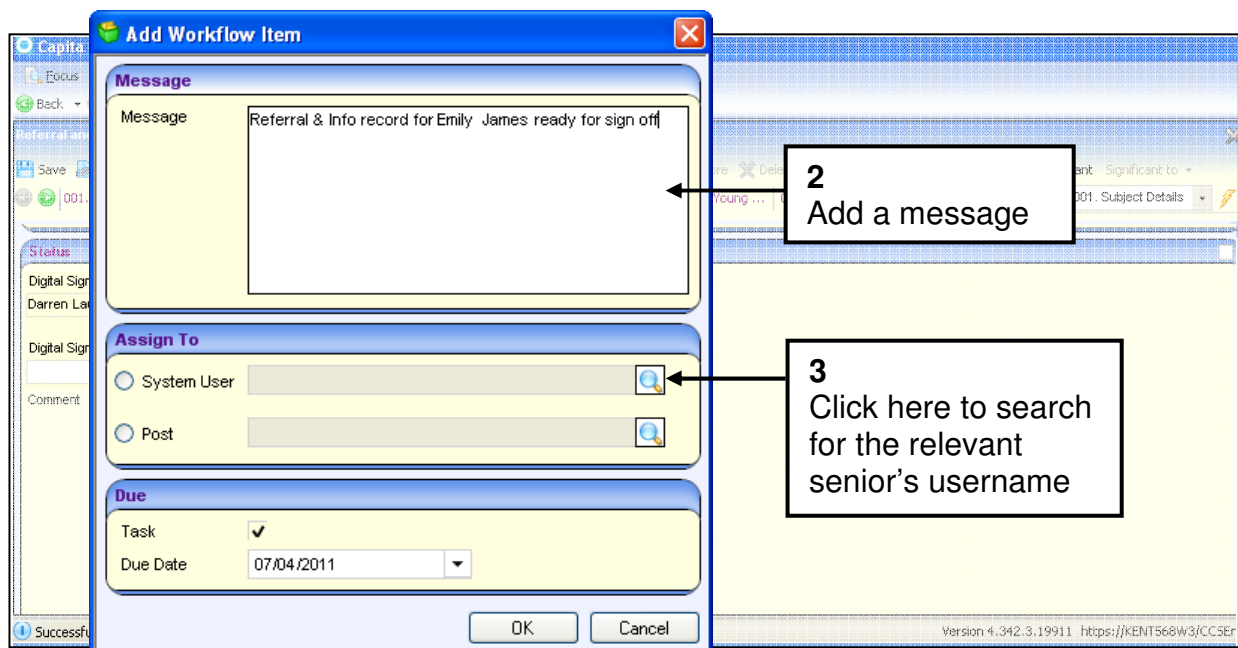
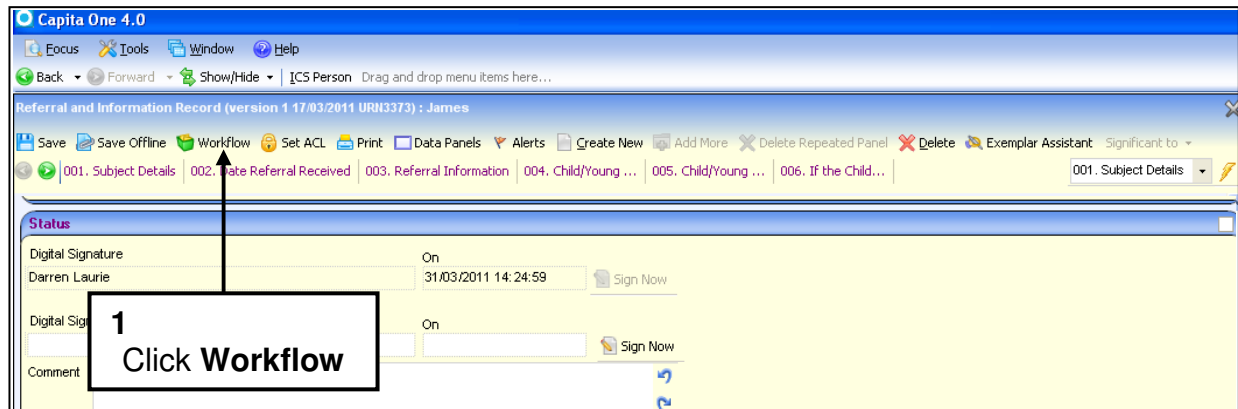
*'Relationship to the Child / Young Person.' is mandatory and must be answered before sign off can occur.....



Workflow

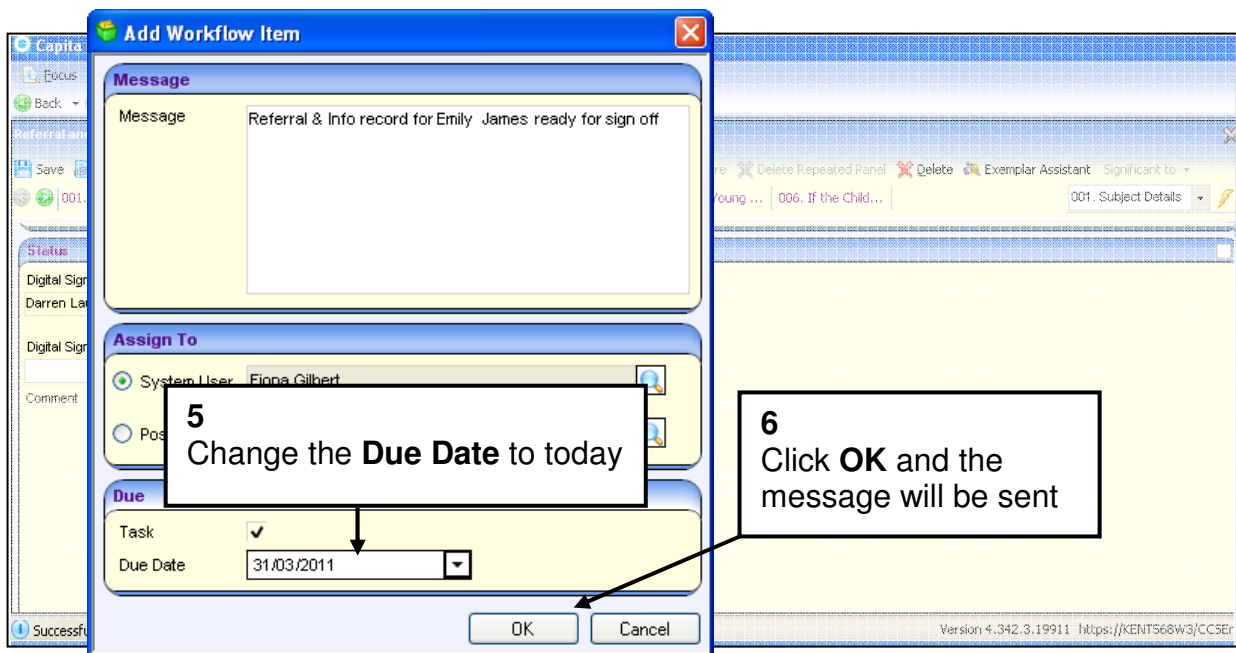
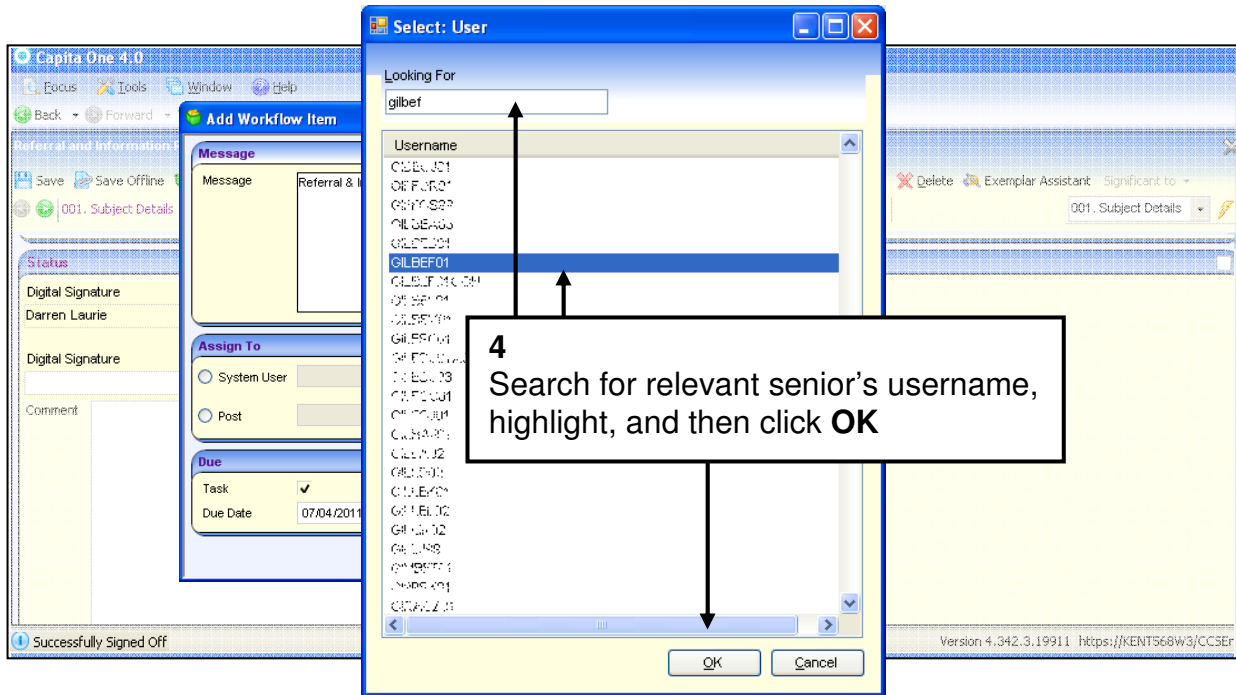
Workflow messages can be used to advise another ICS user of action required in an exemplar – this could include a Social Worker sending a workflow message to their Manager advising them that an exemplar is ready for checking or ready for counter-sign off. It could also include a Manager sending a message back to a Social Worker advising of required changes.

Workflow messages are sent from the exemplar that needs sign off.



Please note:

The message added should make clear what is required e.g. exemplar ready for first sign off, ready for second sign off. Where a 'cloned' exemplar is being work-flowed for sign off this too should be made clear, as the senior will have already read the 'original' and may not need to read through a cloned version



Relevant senior actions Workflow message to access the exemplar

Hint:
Use **Show/Hide** if your **Workflow** panel is missing

1
From **My Home Page** click on **Refresh**, and then click on the workflow message which will open the exemplar

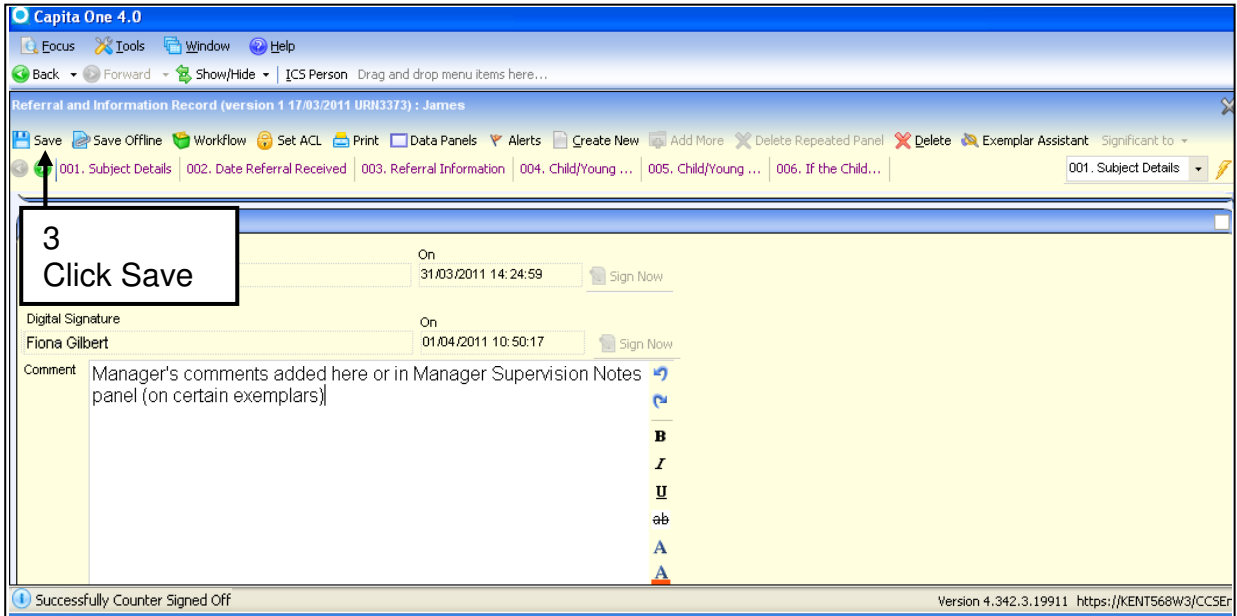
Subject	Task	Due	Assigned By	Post	Assigned On
<input type="checkbox"/> My Home Page	Task	14/03/2011 15:22:00	Pamela Massey	Yes	14/02/2011
<input type="checkbox"/> My Home Page	Task	14/03/2011 19:24:48	Pamela Massey	Yes	14/02/2011
Due Today					
<input type="checkbox"/> Emily James	Task	Today	Darren Laurie		31/03/2011

Hint:
Messages from workers can be distinguished from system generated messages as the **Post** column will be blank

Counter-sign exemplar adding notes as appropriate

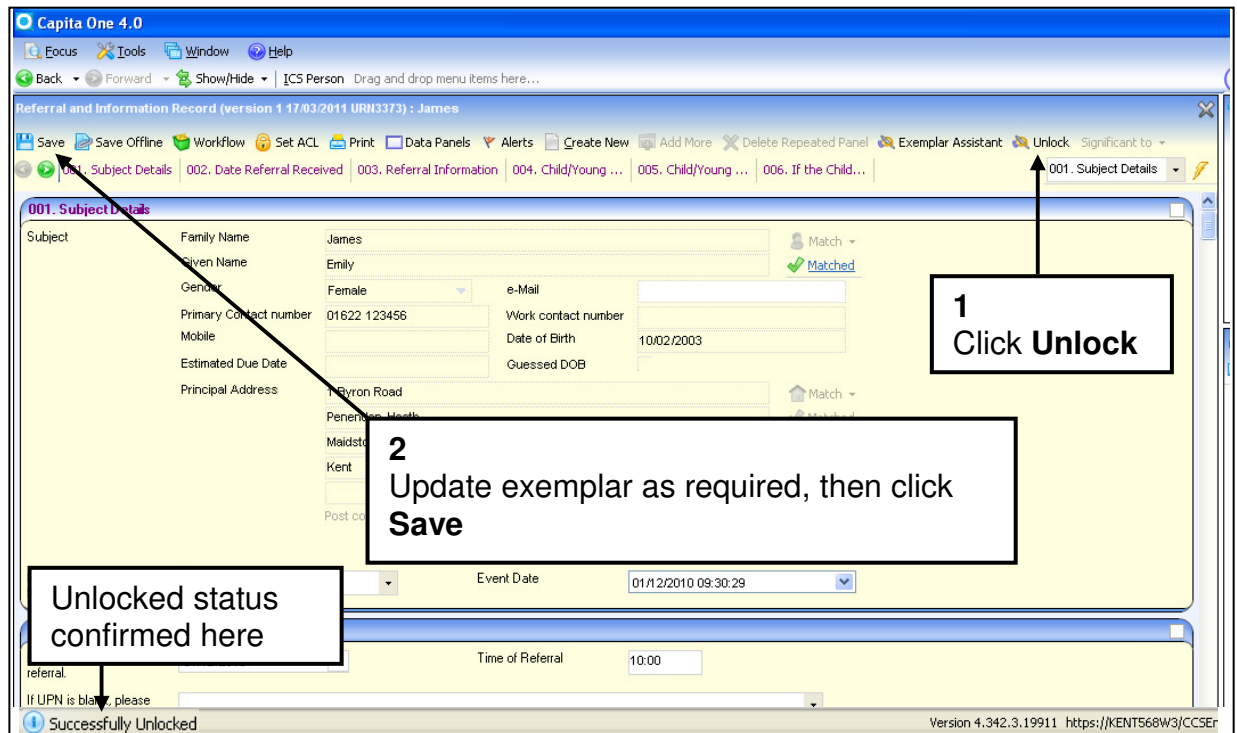
2
Relevant senior reviews exemplar, adding appropriate comments to either the **Manager's Supervision Notes** panel (on certain exemplars) or the **Comments** box on the **Status** panel

3
Click the second **Sign Now** button



Unlocking exemplars

To unlock an exemplar where a mistake has been made or a revision is required (this is dependent on the correct user permissions):



3
Using same process as described previously, relevant professionals should sign and counter-sign the exemplar, and then **Save**

Notice - the 'new' exemplar is called **Version 2** (this is not to be confused as being a duplicate)

Notice - the **Version 2** exemplar appears below the original (**Version 1**) on the Chronology

Date	Updated By	Event	CRN	Version Number	Type
01/12/2010 09:38:47	Darren Laurie (LAURID01)	Initial Assessment Date initial assessment commenced.: 01/12/2010 Arrangement Start Date : Date on which this initial plan will be reviewed. :	2011Data063950	1 17/03/2011 RXK5429	INIASS
01/12/2010 09:30:29	Darren Laurie (LAURID01)	Referral and Information Record Further action. (Please select.) : Initial assessment Arrangement Start Date :	2011Data063950	1 17/03/2011 URN3373	REFERR
01/12/2010 09:30:29	Darren Laurie (LAURID01)	Referral and Information Record Further action. (Please select.) : Initial assessment Arrangement Start Date :	2011Data063950	2 17/03/2011 URN3373	REFERR
01/12/2010 09:27:44	Darren Laurie (LAURID01)	Contact Record Reason: Referral Request - Child In Need/Child Protection	2011Data063950		

A Practitioners Guide to Quality Assurance, Workflow and Signoff in DIATs**Introduction**

Sign off ensures that social workers and their supervisor's or line managers are exercising quality assurance and data quality checks to the work of their team. The statutory timescales will now be measured from the **date that the duty senior or district manager signs the exemplar**. Teams will also need to allow sufficient time to quality assure the assessments and strategy discussions subject of these arrangements and organise cover if the usual supervisor is not available.

Who signs what?

Exemplar	1st Signature	2nd Signature
Referral and Information	Duty senior	Duty senior
	<i>The district manager and DIAT team leader will conduct separate quality assurance of referral decisions.</i>	
Initial assessment	Social worker	Duty senior
	<i>N.B For those cases progressing to strategy discussion the exemplar will be completed by team admin and the duty senior will add the first and second signature.</i>	
Core assessment	Social worker	Duty senior
Strategy Discussion	Chair	Chair
Outcome s47 enquiries	Chair	District manager
	<i>N.B When quality assuring the outcome of s47 enquiries exemplar the district manager will have read the strategy discussion exemplar and ensured that agency checks have been completed before applying their second signature to the exemplar.</i>	

Process Guidance

Two flow charts are attached illustrating the process for signing off:

- i. initial and core assessment exemplar
- ii. Strategy and outcome of s47 enquiries exemplar

Sibling groups and the index child

Unless there are exceptional reasons the expectation is that the assessment or strategy discussion exemplar will be completed on an *index child* that will include information about all of the children within the family.

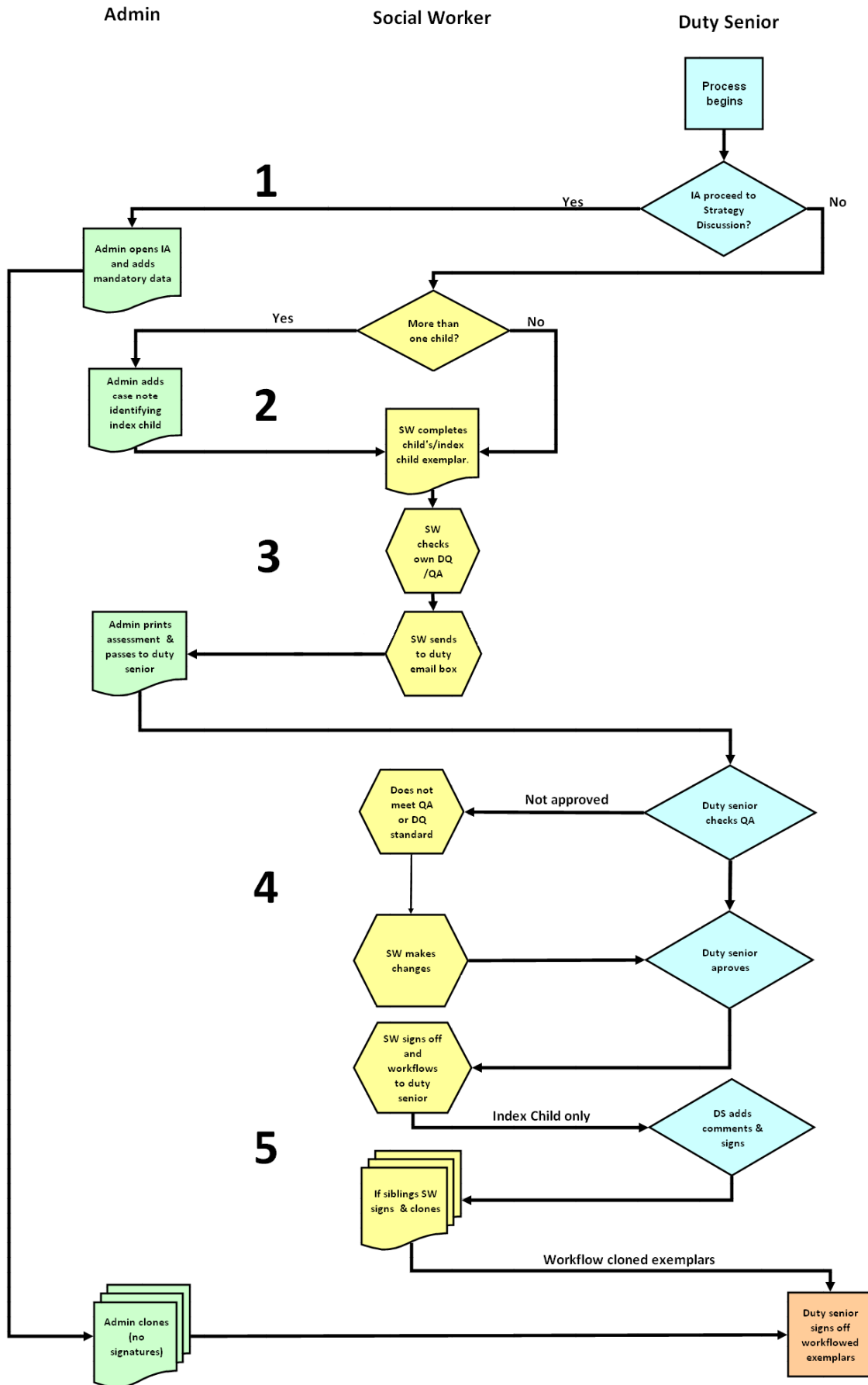
The index child will be identified at the outset and a case note added to each of the siblings by team admin. There is no convention for identifying the index child which will be a local decision. Once quality assured by the duty senior or line manager the exemplar will be cloned to siblings, signed off and work-flowed.

Although it is possible to send completed exemplars to the duty senior or line manager by workflow it is essential that they are not signed off until approved.

Quality Assurance

Feedback about the quality of the assessment, spelling, grammar or data quality cannot easily be made when reading from the screen so duty seniors will mark corrections on a hard copy of the index child's exemplar before returning to the SW for correction. Where there is local agreement about a social worker's proficiency then the exemplar can be work-flowed direct to the duty senior.

Process Chart for Signing Off IA and COAS Exemplars via work flow



Details

1. If the duty senior decision is to “proceed to a strategy discussion” then the initial assessment exemplar can be completed and cloned by the duty admin officer and work-flowed to the duty senior who will apply first and second signature. Admin should ensure that the mandatory panels are completed including clicking twice into **Panel 5 Has the Child Young Person Been Seen** to display a cross. The duty senior will advise what should be included at **Panel 21 Analysis of Information Gathered**.
2. When there is more than one child team admin will be advised which is to be the index child and clone a case note to siblings stating in the summary field, “John Smith is the index child.”
3. The social worker is responsible for both the quality of their assessment as well as the data quality within the exemplar. If the SW or their supervisor has any doubt about their proficiency in either context then they should email the duty team inbox advising of the name and ID of the child whose assessment is ready for quality assurance. The duty admin officer will print off the exemplar and ensure that it is passed to the duty senior for approval. Where there is local agreement about a social worker’s proficiency then the exemplar can be work-flowed direct to the duty senior.
4. The duty senior will check the QA and DQ and either return an annotated paper copy or workflow/ email the SW concerned in order for them to make the necessary changes. Once the duty senior has agreed that the exemplar meets the required standard the SW should apply their signature and workflow the exemplar to the duty senior who will add their comments to the completed exemplar and apply their (second) signature.
5. The SW should then arrange to clone the exemplar (which will include the duty senior comments) to any siblings ensuring that the CRN number has been added before saving and send to the duty senior via workflow. The workflow message should clearly state that this is a cloned version of the index child’s exemplar so that the duty senior can apply their digital signature without having to read the exemplar (unless there is child specific material which needs to be considered).

N.B If a mistake is discovered following sign off the admin officer can open the exemplar and once signed off again there will be second version of the exemplar. This will not create DQ errors.

Process Chart for Signing Off Outcome of S47 Enquiries Exemplar via Work Flow

