



**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE in Consolidation
of Social Work Practice
LEVEL 6 - 60 Credits
BMPPF6044**

**LEARNER PORTFOLIO
(PORTH AGORED and UNIVERSITY OF WALES
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Task 4

Safeguarding in an area which is not your main area of work

Guidance:

*Social Care Wales require newly qualified social workers to provide evidence of their understanding of safeguarding work with adults and children. The assignment below will enable you to demonstrate this. **N.B.** if your usual area of work is with children please write about adult safeguarding. If you usually work with adults, then write about child safeguarding. Ensure you meet the learning outcomes for this task (see appendix 5 of the handbook).*

Question a:

In an area **that is not your main focus of work** (see guidance above), explain the relevant legislation, and the national, local and organisational policies and procedures for safeguarding.

This critically examines the legislation and frameworks underpinning safeguarding practice for children in Wales. Considering influence on professional decision-making and multi-agency collaboration. Throughout, an "at risk" child is defined as "a person under 18 who experiences, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse, neglect or other forms of harm and has care and support needs" (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989) and the Children Act 1989 (Children Act 1989), provide foundations for safeguarding practice. Establishing children's rights to protection, participation and welfare, recognising children as rights holders whose views, needs and best interests inform decision-making. These frameworks influence practice by moving away from paternalistic approaches towards a rights-based model placing the child at the centre of intervention.

The Children Act (1989) remains the primary safeguarding legislation across England and Wales (Children Act 1989). Section 17 promotes early intervention for children in need, while Section 47 places a duty on local authorities to investigate concerns where significant harm is suspected. Amendments introduced through the Children Act 2004 (Children Act 2004) reflects lessons arising from Serious Case Reviews, including those relating to Victoria Climbié (Lamming 2003) and Baby P (Lamming 2009), which highlight failures in information sharing, accountability and professional challenge. These cases demonstrate that legislation alone does not protect children; effective safeguarding also depends on professional curiosity, timely information sharing and sound professional judgement. Consequently, safeguarding requires practitioners to apply statutory duties critically rather than relying solely on procedural compliance.

While Wales operates within the same legislative framework, the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) strengthens safeguarding through its emphasis on wellbeing, prevention and early intervention, particularly under Section 130. This reflects a shift from predominantly reactive child protection responses towards earlier support and partnership working. Furthermore, the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure (2011) embeds the principles of the UNCRC within Welsh policy, reinforcing a legal commitment to children's rights across service delivery and decision-making.

A shared legal framework across England and Wales promotes consistency and reduces inequalities in access to support. However, tensions remain. Practitioners balance preventative support with statutory child protection responsibilities while ensuring that partnership working does not weaken professional curiosity or delay intervention where risk is evident. Effective safeguarding therefore relies on the critical application of legislation within often complex family circumstances.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) provide guidance for recognising, recording, reporting and managing safeguarding concerns. They identify categories of abuse, promote information sharing and support professional decision-making. The procedures also emphasise pre-birth assessments where concerns exist regarding parental capacity, domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental health difficulties or previous child protection involvement, demonstrating the preventative focus of Welsh safeguarding policy.

At an organisational level, safeguarding is supported through supervision, multi-agency training, information-sharing protocols and risk assessment frameworks that strengthen accountability and promote effective intervention.

In conclusion, safeguarding practice in Wales is underpinned by a comprehensive framework of legislation, policy and procedure combining statutory protection with a distinctive rights-based and wellbeing-focused approach. Together, these frameworks reinforce professional accountability and uphold the principle that the child's welfare and rights remain paramount. Ongoing training and supervision strengthen my understanding of these responsibilities and enhance my confidence, professional judgement and effectiveness in safeguarding practice.

(Word Count (550))

500 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

Question b:

Reflect on the difference between safeguarding in adults' and children's work

Safeguarding practice across adult and children's services in Wales has broadened my appreciation of how both aim to protect individuals from abuse, neglect and harm, despite some differences in legal, policy and practice frameworks. Furthermore, the differences notably influence professional decision-making, risk management and the balance between protection and individual rights.

Children's safeguarding is primarily governed by the Children Act (1989) Children Act (2004) and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019). These frameworks establish that the child's welfare is paramount and recognise that children may lack the maturity, power and capacity to protect themselves. Consequently, practitioners may intervene without consent where there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm under Section 47 of the Children Act (1989). Guidance such as Working Together to Safeguard People (Welsh Government 2022) and Welsh Safeguarding Procedures (2019) mandate the approach in which safeguarding responsibilities can outweigh a child's wishes when safety is compromised.

In contrast, adult safeguarding in Wales is shaped by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) (SSWBA), the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019). These frameworks place greater emphasis on wellbeing, voice, choice and control. The SSWBA (2014) requires practitioners to promote individual outcomes through strengths-based and co-productive practice. Unlike children's services, safeguarding interventions often depend upon an adult's consent and capacity, requiring practitioners to balance protection from harm with respect for autonomy and self-determination, linked to unwise decisions.

Throughout my progression I have been able to reflect on these differences, highlight how risk is understood differently across practice settings. In children's services, risk is often assessed in relation to parental capacity, developmental needs and the likelihood of significant harm. In adult services, risk is frequently negotiated with the individual, even where professionals disagree with their decisions. Early in my practice, I sometimes approached adult safeguarding from a child protection perspective, focusing primarily on risk reduction. However, experience and supervision have helped me recognise that attempts to eliminate risk can become paternalistic and potentially oppressive if they fail to uphold an individual's rights and autonomy.

Despite these differences, both areas rely upon professional curiosity, effective communication and multi-agency collaboration. Child and Adult practice reviews repeatedly demonstrate that safeguarding failures often arise not from gaps in legislations, but from weaknesses in information sharing, multi-agency coordination. Professional challenge, accountability and decision making (McManus et al 2023; McManus Ball and Monaghan,2025).

Through my experience, I believe safeguarding does not lead to the same outcomes for all.. Understanding these distinctions has strengthened my ability to balance rights, wellbeing, risk and professional accountability within Welsh social work practice.

(Word Count: (426)

400 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).