



GRADUATE CERTIFICATE in
Consolidation of Social Work Practice
LEVEL 6 - 60 Credits
BMPF6044

LEARNER PORTFOLIO
(PORTH AGORED and UNIVERSITY OF
WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID)

Learner's name: Dawn Evans

Email address: 2024394@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Learner's University Registration Number:

Cohort: 15, 16, 17

WALES ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
AND APPLIED RESEARCH

Task 1

Developmental review – Part a

Guidance:

This task should be completed by taking into account the work that you will have undertaken since qualifying, and discussions with your mentor and supervisor/line manager as part of your First Three Years of Practice Individual Plan.

Task one (part a and b) should incorporate the use of a model of reflection.

You must meet the Learning Outcomes for this task (see appendix 5 of the handbook).

Please answer the question below.

Question:

Using a reflective model critically reflect on your professional development since qualifying as a Social Worker. Make reference to the supervision, training, learning and research that has impacted on your work. Based on this and continuing to use a reflective model outline what you have identified and agreed with your manager and/or mentor for your development over the coming 12 months. You must demonstrate how you intend to meet all of the following learning outcomes:-

- applying analysis in assessment to inform interventions;
- working collaboratively with people in need of care and support, their carers and other professionals;
- intervention and application of professional judgement in increasingly complex situations.

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

My first role as qualified as a social worker commenced within the Looked After Children's Team (LAC) for a Local Authority (LA). I was afforded regular supervision with my senior practitioner which provided a safe space and opportunity to reflect on work I was undertaking and evaluate the impact it has on both myself and the individuals with whom I work.

Supervision between my supervisor and I centered around Kolb's Experiential learning model of reflection. Foote et al (2013) posit that this model consists of four stages of learning starting with concrete experience (the event), Reflective Observation (personal thoughts and feelings), Abstract Conceptualisation (drawing on previous knowledge and experiences to make sense of it) and finally, Active Experimentation (what you would do differently?). There are many benefits of reflection in social work practice including easing tensions and uncertainty (Munro, 2011)

Undertaking a range of assessments is integral to my role. During discussions with my senior practitioner I was able to recognise that I lacked of confidence to challenge inconsistent and contradictory information due to personal fears that doing so would add to or cause conflict within family systems or damage the working relationships I had developed with individuals. Clarifying inconsistencies would enhance my knowledge and understanding of the situation/circumstances, thus supporting the process of analysis in order to make informed decisions regarding interventions and outcomes. To develop my confidence in this area I plan to undertake shadowing opportunities to draw on the skills and knowledge and adopt effective practice methods being utilised by more experienced practitioners. I anticipate that the application experiential learning will support me to develop and become more confident in my own practice in this area. To support my development of applying analysis to assessments I plan to read a range of "good" assessments sourced by my supervisor to reflect on the use of analysis and seek to undertake report writing skills training to support further development.

Working collaboratively with people in need of care and support, their carers and other professionals is fundamental to social work practice. Hall et al (2014) postulate that communication skills are vital to developing collaborative working relationships. Throughout my previous employment I have experience of working with individuals from diverse backgrounds which has enabled me to acquire a range of skills which would support me in this aspect of practice. However, during supervision I was able to reflect that much of my experience has been with adults and a deficit of my development was in capturing the voice of children. Participation is one of the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Article 12 sets out the right of children and young people to express their opinion and have their opinion taken into account when decisions are being made that affects them. Koprowska (2010) maintains that sitting down and talking face to face with adults for too long is not something children enjoy and therefore using age-appropriate toys and creative activities is a more effective method of engaging children. Woodcock Ross (2016) posit that social workers should prepare resources that are suitable to the child's age, intellectual ability, interests and skills (Woodcock Ross,2011).

To address this, I plan to source a selection of age appropriate tools collected from books, the internet and ones deemed successful by colleagues. I aim to use these techniques during direct work with children and reflect on the effectiveness during future supervision.

Woodcock-Ross (2016) postulate that in the field of social work, practitioners are required to work in circumstances which are often risky, ambiguous and complex. Drawing on Kolbs Reflective observation during supervision I identified that I lacked confidence in applying professional judgement. A study by Fleming et al (2015) found that when undertaking assessments social workers considered risks to the child, and the perceived 'reputational risks to the worker' and the fear of blame should things go wrong. Supervision enabled me to reflect on my evidence based knowledge and training which is significant to the process of applying professional judgement. Furthermore, my supervisor promoted further reflection and encouraged me to be aware of how my own values, experiences and the relational dynamics with families could influence my Professional judgement.

To help alleviate my fear and develop confidence in my decision making my supervisor encouraged me to bring cases to reflect on during supervision.

To alleviate my fears of making wrong professional judgements I plan to observe core group meetings and case conferences to experience the decision making and planning process within child protection. I plan to undertake shadowing opportunities of child protection investigations (S47) to support my understanding of the processes involved and with guidance and supervision I aim to take a more active role. By accessing ABE (Achieving best Evidence) training will increased my confidence in rationalizing complex decisions and practice.

Word Count: 803

Task 1 (Part b) Developmental Review

Guidance:

Please ensure you refer to a reflective model and that you met the required learning outcomes for this task (See appendix 5 of the handbook).

Question:

Using a reflective model critically reflect on your development including reference to training, learning, research and use of supervision since completing Task 1 (part a) (when you began the programme).

Consider in discussion with your mentor/supervisor/line manager the extent to which your learning needs have been achieved. Identify any additional learning needs to support your development in the transition to becoming an experienced practitioner in your future career. You must include a reflection on feedback that you have received from individuals in need of care and support and/or their carers and how this feedback has informed your future professional development.

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

Using Driscoll's "What" Model of Reflection I will critically evaluate my development highlighted in Task 1 (part A) to reflect on my practice as a social worker and consider additional training and developmental needs to support effective future practice.

Driscoll's Model focuses on three key questions for structured reflection:

What?: describing the situation, actions taken, and observations. **So what?:** promotes deeper analysis and reflection on the significance and impact of the experience promoting greater understanding to identify emerging themes. **Now what?:** Thinking about how to apply what has been learnt to future experiences.

I will reflect on my learning needs in Task 1, part A by applying 2 of Driscoll's questions: So What? And What Now?

So What?

In task 1 (part A) I identified I lacked confidence in challenging inconsistent and contradictory information due to personal fears of damaging professional relationships I had developed with individuals. I undertook shadowing opportunities enabling me to witness accounts parents gave, in relation to injuries to their children and the processes subsequently involved. Where there were inconsistencies

between the account of the parent and the medical professional's judgement, I observed experienced colleagues in their interactions with parents/carers. Since the beginning of this programme, I have benefitted from regular peer and formal supervision, providing opportunities to reflect on the communications and interventions of what worked, what didn't and what could have been done/said differently when faced with similar situations. I was encouraged to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child was paramount and therefore significance of having difficult interactions regardless of the professional relationship, in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the SSWBA 2014.

This enabled me to be more confident in my practice when I was met with varying information and discrepancies. I ensured I maintained clear and concise records of parent/carers accounts and information gathered from citizens and professionals linked to the family when undertaking assessments. During supervision, I was supported to link legislation, policies, processes, theory and methods to guide my practice. Supervision allowed a safe space to reflect on how my personal values might influence my professional judgement. My supervisor and I reflected on the value of utilising The Child's Assessment Triangle, a conceptual model that supports social workers to systemically assess the needs of children and families (BASW 2025) focusing on the child's developmental needs, parenting capacity and family/environment. I became more confident in exercising my professional judgement and appropriately challenging parents in order to safeguard the child by highlighting necessary changes to allow the child(ren) to thrive whilst still being able to maintain effective working relationships.

The college of Social Work (2025) posits that we are continually receiving feedback, verbally and non-verbally, about our interventions, and how people feel about us. Referring to the family in task 4, I received positive feedback from professionals. I learnt there had been ongoing concerns raised by teachers and health visitors prior to my involvement regarding the care of the children by their mother. I was commended for gaining their views and following up concerns. This feedback enhanced my confidence in my professional judgement and highlighted the value in

having good working knowledge of the child, the systems around the child and the benefits of collaborative working.

I was not afforded formal feedback from the mother in task 4 though there were times when she would become angry and tell me to leave. This response is a form of feedback which I reflected on during formal supervision. As a newly qualified social worker, I was eager to “make a positive difference.” Supervision helped me to recognise that citizens who are mandated to work with social workers may not share the same optimism and therefore feedback may be negative. Whether, good or bad, feedback should be viewed as opportunities for critical reflection and for further learning and development (The College of Social Work, 2025).

What now?

Having changed roles since commencing this programme I am able to apply transferrable skills, knowledge and training from my previous role.

Working as a Therapeutic Practitioner within CAMHS specialising with LAC, I undertake mental health assessments and hold secondary Care cases, enhancing my knowledge of the Mental Health Act (1983) and the Mental health (Wales) Measure (2010).

Whilst I endeavour to apply more creative ways of communicating with children, I have a tendency to revert back to the “exchange model” which is less effective with children. I plan to continually research and apply creative ways to engage children during assessments and interventions recognising this may take longer but more effective in gathering pertinent information

Regular supervision continues to provide opportunities for practice reflection allowing me to discuss areas of difficulty, celebrate successes and identify additional learning/training.

I have undertaken Dan Hughes’ “PACE” training, level 1 and 2, Supervision Training enabling me to support students and new staff. I am currently completing Cognitive

Behavioural Therapy Training and Motivational Interviewing and recognise the importance of reflection to support effective future practice.

Word Count: 825

Reference List

BASW (2025), Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families. Available online at: [Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families | BASW](#) [Electronically Accessed 1st June 2025]

Fleming, P, Biggart, L, Beckett, C. (2015), Effects of professional experience on child maltreatment risk assessments: A comparison of students and qualified Social Workers. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 45 (8) (2015), pp. 2298-2316.

Foote, S., Quinney, A. & Taylor, M. (2013), *The Social Work Assignments Handbook: A practical Guide for Students*. London: Routledge.

Koprowska, J. (2010), *Communication and Interpersonal Skills in Social Work*. 3rd ed. London: Learning Matters Ltd.

Mental Health Act (1983). London, HMSO.

Mental health (Wales) Measure (2010). London, HMSO

Munro, E. (2011) *The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report: A Child-Centred System*. *Department for Education, London*.

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. London: HMSO.

The Children Act 1989. London: HMSO.

The College of Social Work (2025). Principles for gathering and using feedback from people who use services and those who care for them. Available online at: [Principles for gathering and using feedback from people who use services \(ripfa.org.uk\)](https://ripfa.org.uk/principles-for-gathering-and-using-feedback-from-people-who-use-services) [Electronically Accessed 1st June 2025]

Woodcock Ross J. (2011) *Specialist Communication Skills for Social Workers: Focusing on Service Users' Needs*, London, Palgrave Macmillan

Woodcock-Ross, J. (2016), *Specialist Communication Skills for Social Workers: Developing Professional Capability*. 2nd ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Available online at: [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/article/43e47565/convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child) [Electronically Accessed 2nd December 2024]

