

**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: Jodie Evans

Email address: evansjodie123@gmail.com

**Learner's University Registration Number:
0801584**

Cohort: 21 onwards

Task 1

Part a

Developmental review

Guidance:

Task 1 part a asks you to use a model of reflection to reflect on your past practice and future developmental needs. It should be completed by taking into account the work you have undertaken since qualifying. In discussions with your mentor and/or supervisor/line manager identify your future developmental needs as part of your First Three Years of Practice Individual Plan under each of the 3 learning outcomes below.

You must meet the Learning Outcomes for this task (see appendix 4 of the handbook).

Please answer all elements of the question below.

Question:

Using a reflective model critically reflect on your professional development since qualifying as a social worker. Based on this and in discussion with your mentor/supervisor/line manager go on to identify and justify your future developmental needs over the coming 12 months under **each** of the 3 Social Care Wales (SCW) learning outcomes listed below providing at least one developmental need for each of the learning outcome below:

1. Applying analysis in assessment to inform interventions.
2. Working collaboratively with people in need of care and support, their carers and other professionals.
3. Intervention and application of professional judgement in increasingly complex situations.

This task must make reference to how the supervision, training, learning and research has and will inform your practice.

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

I am using Borton's model of reflection (1970) to critically reflect on my professional development in my first year of practice. This model has enabled me to consider what has gone well over the course of 12 months, as well as areas I feel I need to develop. I was fortunate to secure a post in one of the teams I had completed a placement in, and so I feel that I was starting from a point of limited knowledge as opposed to no knowledge at all. I feel that I have gained a great deal of knowledge over this first year. However, there are still areas that I feel I need to develop, and the following have been identified as key areas for this coming year.

In order to develop my skills in relation to applying professional judgement in complex situations, the first area I would like to work on is my understanding and knowledge on completing Section 47 investigations. A S.47 investigation (Children Act, 1989) places a requirement on Local Authorities to

undertake investigations when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is at risk of immediate harm. I have completed the Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) training and would like to now put what I have learnt into practice. As I have not yet completed any S.47's I will arrange to shadow other workers when they undertake investigations to better understand the process. The use of supervision and peer support will also be used in order to critically reflect on my practice and to develop my understanding and practice. Brown and Bourne (1996) suggest that the ultimate aim of supervision is to ensure that the practitioner delivers the best possible service to those who need it, and so I will utilise supervision sessions fully.

The second area of practice I would like to develop is improving my collaborative skills when working in a multiagency context, and my knowledge when working with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC's). The Local Authority is part of the National Transfer Scheme, which works on a rota basis with other Local Authorities to accommodate young people arriving in the country to seek asylum. To date, I have worked with a couple of young people but have noted a significant increase in the referrals being received which means the work is becoming more frequent. To develop my skills further when working collaboratively with those in need of care and support, I will undertake relevant training provided by the Home Office in relation to completing age assessments, understanding the UASC process and what that entails. I have also identified a need to have an awareness of other cultures to ensure that the subsequent care plan reflects the needs and wishes of the individual. Purnell (1995) provides an overview of cultural competence, and this is a model I will use to consider other cultures and how I can remain respectful and considerate in my practice. Referring to the Code of Professional Practice (Social Care Wales, 2017) which states that workers should communicate in an open, appropriate, accurate and straightforward manner. In addition, I need to consider my own communication methods, including language to ensure that the approach I use lends itself to the collaborative approach. I will utilise feedback from others, in order to develop my skills further.

The final area I wish to work on is my confidence and knowledge in undertaking court work. To date, I have had limited opportunities in the court arena and so applying analysis in assessments to inform interventions is an area where I lack confidence. During my first year of practice, I was required to complete a Section 7 report within the first 4 weeks of qualifying. Prior to this, I had no experience of writing court reports. This highlighted my inexperience but using Borton (1970) I was able to identify further developmental needs in this area. To address this, I have started to look at some literature into the court process. Plotnikoff and Woolfson (1996) provide some guidance for social workers on how to prepare reports for court under the Children Act (1989), and this has been useful for me to start to refer to. I have requested some training in writing and preparing court reports understanding the way in which court reports should be written., I will also read court reports prepared by more experienced social workers to gain an understanding of the factors that need to be addressed. Furthermore, to develop further I have requested further court work from my Line Manager in order to gain further experience in this area.

Word Count: 766

Task 1
Part b
Developmental Review

Guidance:

Task 1 part b is a 2-part question and a continuation of task 1 part a and you **must** refer to a reflective model in this task.

Please ensure that you meet the required learning outcomes for this task (See appendix 4 of the handbook) and that you answer both parts of the question.

Please answer all elements of the question below.

Question

Use a reflective model to critically reflect on the learning needs you identified in task 1 part a under each of the 3 SCW learning outcomes.

This must include reference to training, learning, research and supervision and reflection with your mentor/supervisor/line manager on the extent to which your learning outcomes has been achieved.

Identify your learning needs to support your development in the transition to becoming an experienced practitioner in your future career following the completion of this programme.

To reflect upon my first year in practice I am going to use Borton's Model of Reflection (1970). This model has enabled me to reflect on my practice at different stages and has helped me to consider and analyse how my practice could be improved further. I feel that in particular, using the 'what, so what and now what?' stages have helped me to box my thought process so that I have been able to consider and reflect on the various stages and not think too far ahead, or overthink which is something I have recognised I have a tendency to do at times.

The first area of practice I identified as a development opportunity was my knowledge and skills in relation to applying professional judgement in complex situations, specifically when completing Section 47 investigations (Children Act, 1989). Initially my plan was to shadow more experienced social workers in order to gain an understanding of the different approaches and tools they used whilst undertaking assessments such as these. However, due to time constraints I was unable to complete any shadow work and found myself in a position where I was tasked with a S.47 to undertake along with a police officer. In this instance, I pulled on my existing knowledge in order to complete the piece of work required. Luckily, I was paired with an extremely experienced police officer who was aware of my lack of experience and so led the investigation. I have since completed several S.47 investigations, both jointly with police and alone. I have found that linking in with a manager has been really helpful when considering next steps. I continue to read relevant research and case studies as well as colleagues work. In order to develop my knowledge further, I feel that experience will increase my understanding and knowledge. A skill I would like to develop further is the wording of the questions I ask. There is a need to ask neutral, open ended questions so that children can tell their story without being coerced or 'led' by the questions. The advice given during the Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) training I completed was that asking leading questions to a child may indicate there is a desired or correct response which can be problematic if a case later goes to court. And so this is a skill I wish to develop further in my future practice.

The second area of development I identified was improving my collaborative skills when working in a multi-agency context. Prior to this course, my understanding of working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC's) was limited. As part of my development, I was fortunate enough to access a range of training run by the Home Office, which included Age Assessment Training and Triple Care Planning for asylum seekers. We often have young people enter the country whose age is in question, and at times age assessments are required. This training was invaluable to me as it provided me with a framework in which to speak to UASC's in order to try and determine their age. Developing my understanding of different cultures has also enabled me to become more effective and I have done this via researching on reputable websites such as the Home Office and by engaging in meaningful conversation with the young people I am supporting. As unaccompanied children are still entering the country, I will continue to work with these young people which I hope will increase my understanding and competence further.

Finally, the third area identified was developing my understanding of court work. I have had several opportunities to complete court reports (Section 7 and 37 – CA 1989) and have fully utilised supervision sessions, colleagues experience and read relevant material which has assisted me in this area. Reading material such as The PLO Outline (CIW 2024) has helped me to develop and broaden my knowledge of the overall process. I feel that I now have a better understanding of the court process and what is required in a court report. Again, further experience will be beneficial as well as reading relevant literature and case studies.

Word Count: 684

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

Question

Reflect on feedback that you have received from individuals in need of care and support and/or their carers and explain how this information has helped shape your practice and future professional development.

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

The feedback I received during Task 2 was a fair reflection of the interaction. Parent 1 felt that I did not fully understand his situation, and whilst I would argue that I did understand it, I was able to reflect on my own values and beliefs in this instance. I found myself frustrated during various points of the conversation, but this was not because I did not understand his situation, it was more because I did not understand why he was not being more proactive to ensure that child 1 was able to return to his care.

Word Count: 97

Total task 1 part b 750 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

