



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

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

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Learner's University Registration Number: 24189

Cohort: 21 onwards

Task 2

Observation of Practice

Guidance:

*A learner must choose an observation of **direct social work practice** with people in need of care and support and/or their carers. The observation cannot be from giving evidence in court, contributing to strategy group meetings, case conferences or tribunals or any other indirect activity. The consent of the individual/s in need of care and support and/or their carers must be sought before the observation is undertaken. The observation must be undertaken by an observer who is social work qualified and has at least 3 years' experience (criteria set out in the Programme Handbook). The observation must be for a minimum of 30 minutes. The observer will gain feedback from the individual/s in need of care and support and/or their carers using either the pro forma below or one of the learner's own design at the end of the visit.*

The learner is responsible for providing a method of gathering feedback for the observer to use. This can be of their own design, and/or adapted to meet the needs of the individual. The provided pro forma can be used where appropriate. The method used will depend on age, ability and language/communication needs of the individuals in need of care and support and/or their carers.

This section will include examples of the ways in which effective communication impacts on practice in relation to language use, language needs and cultural sensitivity. You must demonstrate the principles of the "Active Offer" and make reference to "More than Just Words" (Welsh Government, 2012).

Please ensure you meet the Learning Outcomes for this task (See appendix 5 of the handbook).

Please answer the questions below.

Observation Summary

Please include name of the expert witness observing in learner's details section of the portfolio.

Date of observation: 4/9/2025

To be completed by learner.

Question:

Context

Set out the social work objectives and give a brief description of the situation including geographical and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues, including how consent was gained and how you have considered the impact of the observation on the individual in need of care and support and/or their carers.

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

Purpose of my visit was to share the Case Conference report with a parent prior to the Case Conference meeting that will be held in a week's time. I wanted to reflect with the parent on the journey she has been on and the progress she has made in the past year. I will be referring to the parent as 1 in order to keep confidentiality.

Prior to the visit I gained verbal consent. I also asked for consent for my colleague to observe, and explained the purpose and she agreed. On reflection I feel that gaining prior consent and sharing the information about the purpose of my visit and my colleague observing made her feel more at ease and enabled the visit to go ahead as planned.

The family live in a rural and deprived area of Wales. According to the census, 51% speak Welsh in the area with majority being under the age of 10 years old. Number of people living in the area understand some Welsh but will not be confident in speaking it and would prefer to discuss anything through English. I have previously gained her requirements around the 'active offer' (Welsh Government, 2016) and she chose to have all discussions in English.

When working directly with families I have learnt that it is important that my ethics and values are right and that I am responsive, aware and sensitive to other's values and ethics. As stated on the Social Care Wales website the "code of ethics Wales" are standards and rules that social workers must work towards to ensure a safe and well practice. Beckett et al (2017 p.3) explains values as a "central position in social work because the job, like that of other helpful professionals, constantly places us in the position of having to make ethical decisions, decisions about what is the right thing to do not in a technical sense but in a moral one."

Words: 323

Question:

Critically reflect on your communication methods and skills during the observation; including how you identified whether you had the necessary communication skills to work with the individual in need of care and support and/or their carers.

You must use a person-centred approach to demonstrate the integration of social work ethics, values and the Code of Professional Practice. This must include culturally and linguistically sensitive practice and the principles of the “Active Offer” and make reference to “More than Just Words” (Welsh Government, 2012).

The child was placed on the child protection register at birth due to domestic violence and the risk that her parent's toxic relationship had on her. In my opinion, having a family within the Child Protection process gives me as a social worker time to get to know the family as they are procedures that I must follow within a certain timescale. I have worked with this family for 14 months and believe that I have gained good knowledge and understanding of them as a family and have built a professional bond with them as well as the extended family.

“More than words” framework is key for social care and health sector in Wales and as explained on the Government website, it recognises Welsh language as a vital part of the quality of care that service users receive. “It puts a duty on public bodies and third sector to take a reasonable step in providing a bilingual service.” (Social Care Wales) As explained previously, 1 lives in a rural and a very high population of Welsh speakers part of Wales but has decided to communicate with me through the medium of English.

Due to the child's age my approach when communicating with her is different to my approach when discussing with an adult, or even with an older child. I would use observations and non-verbal communications such as gestures, facial expressions, eye contact and body language to get an understanding of her feelings. As she was growing up, my method of communicating with her changed and adapted.

O'Reilly et al (2015) describes a child-centred approach when working with children during the child protection process within their research. They describe that social workers need to be skilled in order to engage with children in a different way that they would with an adult, and with different age groups. They used role play skills within their research to investigate how children and social workers interacted during the child protection assessments. Data was collected to establish the thoughts and experiences of children and result showed that children responded better to a child-centre approach and the use of role play. When reflecting on my own practice when communicating with 1's child during this visit, past

and all throughout the child protection process I used play to gain information and understanding on her feelings and what she likes and dislikes and this was reflected in the report that I shared with 1. Another main communicating style that I used within my practice is to observe any baby or child with their main care giver or parent. This will speak volumes to me as the child's social worker of their relationship. Henze-Pedersen (2025) describes social workers can sometime prioritise parents and guardians' views and perspective and that the children's participation can become symbolic instead of meaningful part of any assessment, intervention and report. I wanted 1's daughter to feel that she was part of the report, that I captured her relationship with both her parents and created a picture of her lived experience so when she is older, and would like to read her file that her wishes, feelings and experience were captured. From 1's feedback it show's that I understood them all as a family and prioritised their needs.

I used the active listening approach as I felt that this would enable 1 to go through all the journey that she has been though and the process that she has made in her own words. This enabled me to get a better understanding of her views and how she saw the journey she has been on.

Lester (2002) explains that active listening has developed over the years and that it is referred to a person centre approach. He explains further as human beings we respond positively to being heard and I feel that 1 needed validation for her feelings and progress.

In order to respond to the Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB(Wales)A 2014) legislation I used the Person-centred Approach (PCA) (Gardner, 2013). Ethos of the (SSWB(Wales)A 2014) is that service users feel that they are being heard and that they have control over their care and support. By using the PCA this will enable me to place 1 at the centre of the process. She has been part of all the planning, and this has ensured that I capture her wishes and feelings.

Thompson and Thompson (2001) explain further that empowerment can be achieved through partnership. It is important that I ensure 1 has her voice heard and that I respond to the needs that is important to her. On reflection I feel that using the Person-centred approach, along side empowerment marry well together when creating a Child Protection Plan and report. This has ensured that 1 feels that this is her family report and is reflective of the journey she has been though during the Child Protection process. The plan is explained within the report to give a picture to anyone who reads it where the family were at the beginning and where they are at the end. It is tailored for them as a family and responds to their specific needs.

As it is stated on the Social Care website Code of Practice are describes as “the standards of professional conduct and practice required of those employed in the social care profession in Wales. The Code plays a key part in raising awareness of the standards of conduct and practice that are expected of the profession.”

When I reflected on my visit with 1 I feel that I was using Code of Practice (COPs) as I do in my day to day work as a social worker, it is engrained in my practice by now that it comes second nature. It frames my discussions and gives me structure. It also helps with the communication methods and skills in order to ensure that 1 is being empowered and that I am working in a person-centred approach. I ensure that I listened to her wishes, feelings and support her in making her own decisions. I was honest in my discussions as some of the information in the report was difficult for 1 to hear but it is important that I was honest with her to ensure that all the correct information was captured within the report. I ensured that I supported 1 to speak her mind if she did not understand or agreed with anything within the report.

I always ensure that I have the family’s best interest at the forefront of my mind as the report reflects their family life and the journey that they have been on. This links into my social work values which are core to my practice which is described by Open University (2021).

The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) “is the professional association for social work and social workers in the United Kingdom (UK). The Code of Ethics states the values and ethical principles on which the profession is based”. By working under the code of ethics it ensures that my practice as a social worker is upholding people’s human rights, working holistically, and respecting diversity to name a few. Although the family were under the Child Protection process, I still ensured that I was keeping to the code of ethics and worked respectfully of them as individuals as well as a family.

Words: 1228

1300 (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

Feedback and comments from individual in need of care and support and/or their carers

Information for the observer

This section of the Observation should not be completed in the presence of the learner.

No formal written feedback is required from the observer on the learner's practice. However verbal feedback should be provided to the learner as soon as possible after the observation. If the observer is not the mentor, then feedback should also be provided to the mentor.

Some or all of the questions below may be used by the observer who can rephrase and add explanations and prompts as required. The observer should record responses from the individual in need of care and support and/or their carers below, or by using an alternative method if required/provided.

Before asking the questions, the observer must explain to the individual comments will be shared with the learner. It may be useful to explain that it is used as a learning tool for the learner to develop their own practice.

If the observer is unable to gain feedback, they should briefly say why.

Was the social worker on time? Or, if delayed, did he or she contact you?	Yes
Did the social worker get your permission in advance for the observer to be present? Did they explain why they were being observed?	Yes, explained someone was coming with her to observe Ceri.
Were you clear why the social worker met with you today?	Yes, sharing the report before Case Conference.
How well prepared do you think the social worker was for his or her meeting with you?	Ceri knows us well. She brought the report with her; she explained it to me before letting me read through it.
How has the social worker listened to you and respected your views and wishes?	Yes, Ceri has been very helpful, she completes tasks on time if there ever is anything.

Did the social worker talk to you in a way that you understood? Did the social worker consider your language needs?	Yes, Ceri has come to know us very well. There haven't been any issues with communicating. Ceri will always return a phone call if she's missed one.
How has the social worker's involvement met your expectations for this visit?	Yes, Ceri has helped us to reach where we are now, getting closer to our goals.
Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make?	No, the family only had praise for Ceri, there was nothing the mother could identify that she would have liked to change.