

**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: Katie Pullin

Email address: katiepullin@hotmail.com

**Learner's University Registration Number:
1001492**

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).

When considering how my professional development has evolved since I qualified as a social worker, I used Jasper (2013) Cycle of Reflection. I felt comfortable using this model to reflect on my practice as it allowed me the opportunity to discuss the positive and negative experiences that I have had during the first year of practice. It also allowed me to critically reflect on what I did well and what aspects of my practice I would change in the future. I found that by completing the third stage of the cycle and considering what action I would take, I was able to reflect on how I would approach situations differently through discussions with my supervisor. Jasper (2013) highlights the importance of reflection with an experienced mentor as they will have a wealth of experience to draw on when discussing different approaches to situations. Section 6 of the Code of Professional Practice (Social Care Wales 2017) states

that practitioners are accountable for their work, and I found that having focused time for critical reflection during supervision was very helpful during my first year in practice.

When I qualified as a social worker, I began working in a long-term team within Children's Services in a local authority that will be referred to as local authority A (Data Protection Act 1998). Under Section 5 of the Social Services and Well-being Act Wales 2014 SSWBA(W) the local authority has a statutory responsibility to promote the well-being of individuals in need of care and support and their families. Completing assessments with individuals and their families has been a key part of my role. Upon reflection, I feel I need to improve the analysis of my assessments in order to make it clear what the future interventions and outcomes would be for the family. I reflected that I usually felt confident doing this when there would be continuing involvement from statutory services but I feel less confident in writing an analysis of a child's needs and possible avenues of support at the end of an intervention from social care. Tait and Wosu (2013) discuss the importance of practitioners setting out the procedure for ending involvement and helping service users to plan for the future when they do not have involvement from statutory services. I identified training that I would like to attend around completing analysis in report writing to ensure that my assessments are not too descriptive, and clearly set out what the future plan is for the family.

One of the five main principles of the SSWBA(W) 2014 is that individuals should feel in control of the work that is undertaken with them and be central to any planning completed. I feel that I have worked collaboratively with people in need of care and support and their families and have supported service users to voice their opinions during meetings and visits. However, I still feel uncomfortable with the power imbalance that can arise, particularly between other professionals and service users. Miler and O'Bryne (1998) note that it is not possible for social workers to avoid the problems that may arise due to inequality but that they should be aware of them and strive to work in an anti-oppressive manner. When considering the 'Action' (Jasper 2013) that I could take to address this, my supervisor suggested that I utilise the Signs of Safety Model (Signs of Safety 2024) during meetings to ensure that professionals have a balanced view of what was working well, what we were still concerned about and how we felt this could be addressed. We also identified that although I have been referring families for advocacy support, I would benefit from speaking to advocacy services to have a better understanding of the support that they are able to offer to children and their families. I felt that this would help me to not feel conflicted in my role when an individual needs help expressing a view that I do not believe is in the best interest of them or their child (Hardy 2017).

During supervision I reflected that as I am now a year qualified, I have started to be the allocated social worker for child protection cases. I have gained experience of co-working child protection cases but would like to develop my confidence in applying my professional judgement in complex situations. I discussed with my supervisor that this would also be beneficial as I would soon be expected to provide evidence to court within the requirements of the Public Law Outline (PLO) 2014. In order to develop this, I asked to shadow an experienced social worker who was working within the PLO process and to attend the training that was facilitated by the local authority solicitors about writing documents within the PLO process; both of which were agreed during supervision. I will also ensure that I continue to have regular supervision to discuss case management and how to evidence my professional judgement accurately.

Word count – 821 words

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.

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).

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

Section 6 of the Code of Professional Practice (Social Care Wales 2017) details the importance of social workers prioritising their learning and development to improve their knowledge and skills. I feel that during my second year of practice, I have been able to do this through research, training and effective supervision.

At the beginning of this year of practice, I used Jasper (2013) Cycle of Reflection to reflect on my intervention with families and to discuss areas of my practice that I wished to develop during the course of the programme. I feel that I was able to improve my skills in analytical writing in assessments, particularly in assessment writing where I became more confident in detailing future actions following the end of involvement from statutory services. I was able to attend training that was run by local authority A to develop my skills of analytical writing in assessments which I found especially beneficial when I was

completing written work that would be used in court (Public Law Outline 2014). During this year of practice I gained experience of working within the PLO process and writing statements that would be scrutinised by legal representatives. I found supervision a positive experience during this process and benefited from having the opportunity to gain advice and guidance from my supervisor.

During the course of the year, I have become more confident in addressing power imbalance between professionals and service users, without compromising the legal duties placed on me as a representative of the local authority (Adams et al 2009a). I have developed my understanding of the role of advocacy services and how they can benefit both children and families. I have also recognised and accepted the limitations of my role in being able to advocate for service users (Hardy 2017). I reflected that using the Signs of Safety model (Signs of Safety 2024) when working with families helped to ensure that there is a balanced view of what is working well and what we are still concerned about. This model also clearly sets out a plan of how service users and professionals can work together to address the concerns. I found that this worked well and helped to improve the communication between myself and families as it clearly sets out what needs to happen to achieve change (Signs of Safety 2024). I will continue to use this model in accordance with the policies of working with children and families in local authority A.

I found the feedback from a service user particularly useful and humbling to read. I reflected with my supervisor that I was pleased that the service user had appreciated me taking the time to listen to her views as it can be tempting to try to do a visit quickly due to the pressures of working in a busy team and having a large amount of written work and record keeping to complete. In accordance with Section 2 of the Code of Professional Practice (SCW 2017), I try to ensure that if I commit to doing something, I make sure that it is done so that the individuals I work with have a sense of trust in me. I was pleased to see that this was something that was mentioned during the service user feedback.

I found it helpful to apply Jasper (2013) Cycle of Reflection during supervision with cases where I was working within the PLO process. As it was a new experience for me, I was able to reflect when certain interventions didn't go to plan and discuss ways that I would approach the situation differently in the future. I had opportunities to shadow experienced practitioners who were working with similar cases and had the chance to engage in informal peer supervision as well as formal supervision with my mentor. I found this helped my confidence and helped me to develop my skills as a social worker.

I feel that I benefitted from having clear goals to work towards during this year of practice and I plan to continue to outline areas of development at the start of each year of practice going forward. I am pleased with the progress that I made with the areas of development that I focused on during the CPEL programme but I feel there are certain areas of my practice that would benefit from further development and gaining different experiences. Towards the end of the programme, I reflected with my supervisor that I would like to get further experience of completing Section 47 investigations and I decided to move to a social work role in the childcare assessment team in local authority A. I felt that this was the next step in developing my analytical writing skills and allow me further opportunities to manage the ending of involvement with service users.

Word count – 799 words