

**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: Saffron Jane Gregory

Email address: Saffron.Gregory@Swansea.gov.uk

Learner's University Registration Number: 2320811

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).

Reflecting on my first year has given me a deeper insight of my role and a basis to review my experiences (Knott & Scragg, 2013). Borton's (1970) model of reflection allows me to critically reflect in a way that is fluid, ensuring that all aspects of work are encompassed (Dabell, 2018).

Through Borton's model, I start by reflecting on 'what' happened in that first year, and who I was surrounded by, including my manager and colleagues, the service users and the trainers. I recall doing some shadow working and felt surprised that the colleagues I shadowed were

not many more years qualified than I, which made me question the level of experience my colleagues had and to be mindful that we all work in different ways.

The 'So What?' is the second part of the model, it asks me to look back, and it brings feelings of disappointment, surprise and empowerment. It was frustrating the level of responsibility I felt so quickly in my role, which led to a lack of confidence when working with families, and not understanding how to use communication as an effective tool within assessment.

Positive aspects from these experiences are that I have awareness of my feelings at the time, and that it has empowered me to increase my knowledge and confidence through discussions with my mentor, colleagues and training.

Within our supervision, my mentor and I discussed future developmental needs based on the 'Now what' section of the model (Borton, 1970), whilst referring to the social care learning outcomes. I identified that Communication be my first developmental need, in line with learning outcome 1 of the Social Care Wales (SCW) learning outcomes (Social Care Wales, 2018). We discussed using communication to actively listen to service users, enabling a true picture of what's important to the person when it comes to analysing within assessment. I want to ensure that service users feel valued and heard, and plan to achieve this by carefully listening, asking questions and retaining information given by the individual themselves. The aim is that this will establish trust and will help a deeper understanding of the person's needs (Healy, 2012).

The second developmental need we have identified, in line with outcome 2 of the SCW learning outcomes, is to improve knowledge. I plan to build my knowledge with reflection in action with clients, as well as work experience and colleagues (Finne et al, 2022). This need is aimed to support my collaborative working whereby I will have a better understanding of interprofessional roles and responsibilities (Ambrose-Miller and Ashcroft, 2016), which is pertinent in the 'Now what?' part of Borton's model, whereby moving forward positively encourages you to think about what you can do before acting, such as improving your knowledge. To ensure I am improving knowledge, I will actively participate in collaborative practice, and will discuss the outcomes within supervision to ensure improvements are identified. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, 2014 places a duty on professionals to co-operate with each other (BASW, 2023), and so I will also shadow

colleagues and observe interprofessional collaboration to share knowledge and experiences. My mentor and I discussed how review visits with service users are an invaluable source of evidence for understanding where knowledge has been built and where areas of improvement are needed, we confirmed that case discussions and reflections would be part of supervision.

The third developmental need discussed is confidence. I discussed my aim of wanting to feel better equipped to deal with challenging and complex cases, in line with outcome 3 of the SCW learning outcome. My mentor and I discussed how this need could be fulfilled by doing duty days, whereby there is need to use initiative and respond to emergencies. This experience should allow me the ability to quickly analyse situations and respond to crisis which will hopefully build my confidence in my own practice. We also discussed how the three developmental needs are fluid, and how each need will complement the other and allow for an overall broader learning experience. Gaining confidence will allow me to communicate more effectively and put knowledge into practice whereby each of my developmental needs and SCW outcomes will hopefully be met.

Social work is a very emotionally demanding profession. However, supervision and discussions with my mentor has been crucial to debrief, evaluate, gain clarity on cases and identify the next steps that I need to fulfil the role with guidance (Beckett, 2006). Supervision has helped to understand what I do and why I do it, and where I can improve.

Word count: 759

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).

Reflecting on my practice and the developmental needs I initially identified, brings feelings of appreciation and confidence. Naturally, my development since qualifying has at times been challenging, however it has provided many opportunities for learning and personal/professional growth.

To aid my reflection of my learning needs, I am using Borton's 1970 model of 'What? So what? Now what?'. The first part of the model, 'What', asks me to describe what happened in factual terms. This makes me think of the learning need communication, and how I wanted to improve this in terms of carrying out assessments with service users and their families. When I was first in practice and would be writing my assessments, I didn't feel I was capturing the voice of the person in the right way, and that the family members or other professionals were trying to provide all the assessment information without the input of the service user. Borton (1970) asks us in the 'So What?' section to analyse and make sense of the past event, which makes me reflect on my methods of communication. I found that the family members of the service users were overly eager to provide their views on the service users care and support needs, which often resulted in the assessment being heavily built around this information, rather than coming from the service user's perspective themselves. The 'Now what' section of the model helped me think about the steps I could take to overcome the issue effectively. I discussed with my mentor how I could better capture the voice of the service user (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (SSWBA), 2014), and we talked about active listening with the service user, and allocating time within my working day to visit the service user on their own without any family present, in order to allow the service user the time to discuss their views at their own pace and to avoid any disruptions from happening.

I used my supervision sessions with my mentor to discuss my other learning needs and spoke about wanting to improve my knowledge. I explained (via the 'So what' reflection model from Borton) that I felt the need to participate more actively in collaborative working, ensuring that I exercise my role within multi-disciplinary meetings. I explained my feelings that I felt inexperienced of interprofessional roles ('So what' part of Borton's model). The 'Now what' part of reflection aided us to discuss a plan to fulfil this learning need and resulted in me attending more multi-disciplinary meetings with colleagues and shadowing experienced workers within these meetings. My mentor also set up meetings and visits with various team leaders in local teams that we often work collaboratively with, giving me opportunity to learn the roles and responsibilities of other professionals.

The final learning need we discussed was my confidence, something I'd identified that was making me feel unequipped for handling complex situations ('What', Borton 1970). I explained through the 'So what' reflection how I felt this lack of confidence had been caused by a lack of training, and so I booked and completed training in this area within my local authority. Within the 'Now what' next step of the reflection, we discussed how I could utilise my training as well as completion of duty days and supervision to better understand how to respond to emergencies and crisis, all whilst feeling more confident to use my own initiative.

To feel assured that I'd fulfilled these learning needs, I discussed them in regular supervision with my mentor, and discussed assessments and multi-disciplinary working to ensure my mentor was able to feedback on progress made. I was keen to understand the legislation that led our decision making and so did research on relevant laws and completed related training to enhance my development.

Within my supervision, I refer to areas of improvement as a compulsory factor and have identified with my mentor that to positively transition to an experienced practitioner I'd like to further develop my organisational and time keeping skills.

Words: 667

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*).

I have been fortunate to have positive feedback from service users and their families that I have also shared with my senior management and mentor. Part of this feedback was recognising that I had "Never lost sight of the fact (name of service user) is a human being who deserves to be treated with respect & dignity and properly listened to". This feedback has confirmed that I am actively working to improve my highlighted learning needs, and that my knowledge of using a person-centred approach (SSWBA, 2014) has allowed me to work in a way that is holistic and personal to service users and their families.

Words: 106