



**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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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).

This essay will critically reflect on my professional development since qualifying as a social worker, I will use Rolfe et al.'s (2001) model of reflection to complete this task.

The last 12 months have been a steep learning curve. Since qualifying I have been a practicing social worker within children's services. I have worked in the long-term team, with children who are looked after and for the past 4 months I have started working in a new team who complete initial assessments under part 3 of the Social Services Wellbeing Act 2014 (SSWBA2014) as well as providing care and support to families. Reflecting on my first year in practice I can see how far I have developed as a practitioner.

Intervention and application of professional judgement in increasingly complex situations:

During my first year in practice, I discovered that although I was now working in the team where I had completed my final placement and having already been there for six months, I felt like I was starting all

over again. I felt my placement had not prepared me that well to be a newly qualified social worker. The lack of in person visits and shadowing opportunities due to the pandemic had created a lack of confidence and the first few months in the team were very tough. I would like further shadowing opportunities to experience how other professionals manage complex situations and in turn develop my own style of practice.

Applying analysis in assessment and inform interventions:

I had monthly supervision which I found helpful as I was able to share with my supervisor my concerns, discuss my cases and have clear guidance. I was able to share my worries about complex cases and gain direction on interventions that needed to happen. I value supervision greatly as it gives me the opportunity to voice my thoughts, reflect and analyse the support provided and receive direction where necessary.

This brings me on to the second part of the reflection model 'so what.' I can reflect that as a newly qualified worker I had cases that were above my capability simply because we did not have the staff. I gained from the experience, my ability to manage difficult circumstances and people improved but overall, the experience was negative. I feel that my learning and development was hampered due to managing caseloads above my ability. I had the constant feel of anxiety and worry, and this was caused by being pushed beyond my limit. I was the allocated social worker on a case where I was undertaking a parenting assessment on a mother who had spent three months in a parent and baby placement. This was only the second parenting assessment for me to ever complete and I felt a heavy burden at the time. I learnt a great deal and I was well supported by my seniors and provided with excellent guidance. Effective analysis at the end of parenting assessments is key and ties the whole assessment together. I would like to look at specific training to improve my skills within this area of assessments as I develop my parenting assessment skills.

Working collaboratively with people in need of care and support, their carers and other professionals:

This brings me on to the third stage of reflection the "now what". Having moved to a different team I have shared my experiences from my previous team/ first year with my supervisor and we have agreed a plan, reflecting where I am in my career. I am now working in a team where I am completing initial assessments, creating care plans and completing reports where I am expected to justify the outcome of my assessment. I am working with children and families as well as with multiagency on a care and support basis. I am also managing cases where there are safeguarding concerns. We are not a safeguarding team but due to the front-line nature of the work some of the cases escalate and safeguarding interventions are required where I am the key worker. Education, health and the police are three of the key agencies that we work with. Within my last role I was working with children who are looked after; therefore, the key assessments had been done. Within this team I will need to develop my skills of writing assessments as well as working with families and other professionals to prevent escalation and meet the desired outcomes of the families I will be working with. I plan to achieve this through training and research. I wish to attend Family Group Meeting training to work

with families to support themselves without the need for services and I will research what resources are available within the local areas of the families to support them.

791 words

Task 1 (Part b)

Developmental Review

Guidance:

Please ensure you refer to a reflective model and that you met the require 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 has 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).

The reflective model I have decided to use to answer this question is John's model of reflection. This model looks at 5 topics, describe the experience, reflection, influencing factors, could I have dealt with it better and learning, which I have outlined in the below five paragraphs.

Describe the experience:

Having moved teams my goal was to work on parenting assessments as this is the area, I had identified I wished to improve upon. I am working with children and families daily, completing assessments, care plans, child protection reports, core group minutes, care and support plan minutes and I have also been chairing these meetings as the case holder. I have monthly supervision where my cases are discussed thoroughly. Next steps are discussed based on my professional judgement, what is working well and what I am worried about within the team and my role. Supervision for me is a safe space for my professional judgement to be challenged and for me to justify and reflect on my assessment. I find this way of supervision beneficial.

Reflection:

I have not completed any official parenting assessments within the last year but I have completed a number of assessments which has allowed me to develop on my skills of applying analysis within assessment. Parenting capacity is considered within every assessment that is completed as it has a direct impact on the child. I have completed numerous assessments of parents as a part of a holistic assessment on the needs of the child. I feel that my confidence has grown and if one of my cases were to escalate to a point where an in-depth parenting assessment would be required, I feel that I would be more confident within my role from my experience within this team.

Influencing factors:

The team where I am based is a care and support team and we work with families on a short-term basis as we are also an intake team. If there is a risk of significant harm to the child and safeguarding measures are put in place the case is transferred to the long-term team. During joint visits with social workers from the safeguarding team I have been able to shadow other professionals which has been extremely beneficial. Shadowing others and having the opportunity to ask questions about why they said or did something have allowed me to develop further on my own style of working. I have also been shadowed on visits which has allowed me to reflect on my style of practice through peer questions.

Could I have managed better:

Within the short-term team, it can be difficult to hand over cases to the long-term teams. We intervene to support children and families and the impact this has can be lost on us at-times. Having worked on a case for a brief period it was escalated to the long-term team and a new allocated worker; I thought I had managed the handover well; this was not how the child felt and she voiced this to me. She felt let down and that she had trusted me with a lot of information that was personal to her and now she had to build this relationship with someone else. I went out to see the child in school and we spent a long time talking about wishes, feelings and relationships. I was able to fully explain the transfer process and allow her to ask questions which did make her feel better after. I did feed this experience back to my manager during supervision as this was an area that we as a team and I as a worker needed to improve upon.

Learning:

My learning and development over the past year has been immense and reflecting back over the last two years since qualifying I recognise that I have developed both professionally and personally. I have attended family group meeting training and I am confident that I am able to provide this service to children and their families. From working in numerous areas over the county I have been able to research the resources provided by different agencies in the areas and have signposted families when relevant therefore achieving my goal. I am keen to continue to further my development. I am more confident in completing assessments on a whole but would now like to look at other avenues of assessment. I would like to train to complete investigations under Section 47 of the Children's Act 1989. The team I work in complete these on a weekly basis. I also feel that being

trained in this area will be beneficial for the children who I am allocated to work with. It will be good practice that I will be able to complete these assessments for my allocated caseload.

I feel I have achieved all three of the goals I had set, and I hope to continue my learning and development.

815 words