

**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE in
Consolidation of Social Work Practice
LEVEL 6 - 60 Credits
BMPF6044**

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

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Cohort: 21 onwards

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).

Since qualifying, my professional development has been shaped by direct practice, supervision, reflective learning, and research. Using Jasper's ERA model (2003), this essay critically explores my professional development across the three Social Care Wales learning outcomes.

Since qualifying, I have developed my analytical skills through ongoing assessment work. One key experience involved a complex case referred for harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). This was an unfamiliar and specialist area. I followed procedural requirements and completed the AssetPlus assessment alongside an HSB-specific tool, but felt underprepared and lacked confidence making accurate judgements regarding the young person's risks and needs.

This experience highlighted the analytical challenges of HSB assessments. I initially felt anxious, fearing I might make the wrong decision. Through supervision and peer discussions, I recognised that analysis is not clear-cut, and different practitioners interpret information in different ways. These conversations highlighted that uncertainty is natural and good analysis involves critical reflection, collaboration and evidence-based decision making. NSPCC (2019) highlights the importance of using

structured HSB-specific assessments to reduce bias and promote consistency. This case also highlighted the importance of applying an ecological lens to risk to understand the young person's behaviour within the wider environment, rather than seeing risk in isolation.

To improve my ability to apply robust analysis in assessments, I aim to complete AIM3 training. This will provide the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to carry out specialist HSB assessments with greater confidence and accuracy. I will continue to use supervision to reflect and improve my assessments, and I intend to shadow colleagues with experience in HSB cases to build confidence and deepen my analytical skills.

As part of my role, I have worked collaboratively with people in need of care and support, their carers and other professionals. One example involved a young person at risk of permanent exclusion from school. I arranged a multi-agency meeting with the school and other professionals to coordinate a support plan and ensured the family's views were included, in line with Social Care Wales Code of Professional Practice for Social Care (2017). However, the plan ultimately failed, as the young person did not re-engage with education.

Although I initially believed I was acting in the family's best interests, on reflection, I realised that I had not yet established a strong enough relationship for them to share their true views. The meeting took place shortly after my initial involvement and was held in the school. This setting may have reinforced the power of professionals and suppressed the family's true views. Building relationships with individuals is important to establish trust and rapport and enable honesty and respect which is essential for effective interventions (Poulin, Matis and Witt, 2018).

In the next year, I would like to undertake training in strengths-based and relationship-based approaches to improve engagement with families and professionals. Trevithick (2012) highlights the importance of these approaches to empower families to take ownership of their decisions and allow open and transparent communication. This will help build trust more effectively and advocate more strongly for individuals in multi-agency contexts. I also plan to take on a more active role in leading multi-agency meetings to enhance my ability to facilitate inclusive and ethical decision-making.

One case which challenged my professional judgement of balancing statutory obligations against ethical duty to support wellbeing involved a young person on a Youth Rehabilitation Order. They had experienced trauma and had mental health and learning difficulties and often missed appointments, raising concerns about compliance. However, I recognised this as a sign of psychological distress rather than non-engagement.

I used supervision to explore my concerns and reviewed research about trauma and offending behaviour. Youth Justice Board (2019) advocates for a 'child-first' approach that prioritises wellbeing and mental health over punitive responses. With this knowledge, I advocated for adapted interventions, even when some professionals disagreed, viewing it as a lack of punishment. I had to be flexible and resilient, but I also recognised that building a trusting relationship was essential. HM Inspectorate of probation (2016) found that young people are more likely to desist from offending when they trust and feel cared for by professionals.

To strengthen my practice in this area, I plan to attend trauma-informed practice training. This will help ensure that my judgment in complex situation is informed by evidence, ethical reasoning and

psychological insight. I will continue using supervision as a reflective space to explore the emotional and ethical dimensions of complex practice, challenge unhelpful views, and develop interventions that are holistic and person-centred. I will also prioritise my own wellbeing to maintain resilience in demanding work (Carpenter and Webb, 2012).

Reflecting on my first year using Jasper's ERA model has allowed me to critically evaluate my strengths, limitations and development needs. Supervision, research and peer learning have been essential in shaping my practice and will continue to support my development. My key development needs for the coming year include: completing AIM3 training to enhance analytical assessment in HSB cases, undertaking relationship-based training to improve collaborative working, and attending trauma-informed training to strengthen ethical judgement and resilience in complex cases. These goals will enable me to continue delivering high-quality, person-centred, and ethical social work practice.

Words: 821.

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).

For part B of this task, I have again used Jasper's ERA model (2003) to critically reflect on the learning needs in part A.

To develop analysis in assessment as identified in part A, I have completed AIM3 training which focuses on assessing harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). Although I have not managed a new HSB case since completing the training due to a team transfer, I was involved in a peer-review process of an existing case before moving teams.

The peer-review process allowed me to critically reflect on how analytical skills are applied in assessments and reduced the anxieties and isolation of assessing risk and decision-making. Peer reviewing was important for sharing knowledge, experiences and providing emotional support to help manage the pressures and challenges of the work (Martin et al., 2014). The knowledge and skills I have developed through completing AIM3 training will be valuable within my current team, particularly in working with parents and carers to help identify potential instances of HSB and to provide appropriate support or signposting to relevant services.

Although the AIM3 training improved my technical knowledge, I have identified a need to further explore evidence-based assessment frameworks to enhance the quality and defensibility of my recommendations. I intend to undertake training in systemic practice and reflective decision-making to support a more robust and ethically sound assessment process. Continued engagement in supervised reflection will also be essential to reinforce my critical thinking and improve my ability to justify professional decisions (Ruch, 2007).

To support collaborative working with individuals and other professionals, I was aiming to complete relationship and strengths-based training. I have completed Signs of Safety and Person-Centred Approaches training. These models reinforced the importance of strengths-based practice and placing individuals at the centre of decision-making. I have also led care planning and best interest meetings, which involved co-ordinating input from families and professionals.

These experiences developed my understanding of how to promote inclusion and shared decision-making. Leading meetings required me to manage different perspectives and navigate professional tensions, which enhanced my communication and facilitation skills. As Thompson (2020) suggests, effective collaboration depends on the practitioner's ability to foster partnership working while being mindful of power dynamics. Supervision sessions were helpful in unpicking instances where collaboration was challenging and enabled me to reflect on how my role influenced group dynamics and outcomes (Trevithick, 2012).

Moving forwards, I plan to strengthen collaborative working by building effective relationships with professionals such as the child's social worker. I will facilitate joint visits and continue to use supervision as a reflective space to consider how my practice contributes to effective partnership working. My aim is to model and promote open, respectful communication across agencies to ensure that the child's needs remain central in all professional decision-making.

To strengthen my judgement in complex cases, I completed training on the adolescent brain and the impact of trauma, which supported the development of trauma-informed interventions. I have also accessed Enhanced Case Management (ECM) and attended clinical supervision for complex cases, which were instrumental in shaping my thinking.

Supervision and ECM helped me to critically reflect how trauma and adolescent development intersect with presenting behaviours. This reflective space encouraged me

to challenge assumptions, identify unconscious bias, and enhance the quality of my interventions. Munro (2011) emphasises that professional judgement should be rooted in both evidence and reflection, especially in unpredictable or emotionally charged situations. These insights have strengthened my ability to make ethical and balanced decisions.

I recognise a future learning need around supervising and supporting others, especially as I move towards becoming an experienced practitioner. I aim to complete training in supervisory skills, particularly focusing on critical reflection and defensible decision-making in safeguarding contexts. I also plan to continue engaging in peer supervision and exploring research on judgement under uncertainty to enhance my leadership capacity (Ferguson, 2018).

As I prepare for transition into an experienced practitioner, I have identified ongoing development needs, which are applying evidence-based frameworks in assessment and intervention, leading multi-agency collaboration effectively and developing skills in supervision and reflective leadership.

Words: 655.

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).

Feedback from individuals and carers has been invaluable in shaping my social work practice to identify strengths and areas for growth. Positive comments about punctuality, clear communication, and preparedness showed that service users feel respected and supported, reinforcing the importance of professionalism and building trust. Feedback also highlighted the need to allow time to establish rapport, reminding me that patience and active listening are essential. Reflecting on this informs my ongoing professional development, guiding me to enhance skills in relationship-building and collaborative decision-making. Integrating feedback aligns with the Code of Professional Practice (Social Care Wales, 2017) and supports continued professional development.

Words: 97.

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

Total words: 752.