



What motivated you to become a PE?

Write down some thoughts below.

Stage 1 Practice Educator Course

Contents

Module 1

Practice Educator Role

page 04

Module 2

Preparing the Setting

page 08

Module 3

Placement Requirements

page 14

Module 4

Supervision

page 23

Module 5

Adult Learning

page 35

Module 6

Assessment and Observation

page 39

Module 7

Feedback and Assessments

page 45

Module 8

Assessment Requirements and Marking

*Please note that no workbook activities are required for Module 8

Module 9

Working with Struggling Students and PE Assessment

page 50

ACTIVITY 01

Understanding the PCF

Using the Domain Descriptors and the Capability Statements PCF — End of Last Placement / Completion, explain how you will work with a student to help them understand these domains.

01

Professionalism

Identify and behave as a professional social worker, committed to professional development.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

02

Values and ethics

Apply social work ethical principles and value to guide professional practices.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

03

Diversity and equality

Recognise diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles in practice.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

04

Rights, justice and economic wellbeing

Advance human rights and promote social justice and economic wellbeing.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

05

Knowledge

Develop and apply relevant knowledge from social work practice and research, social sciences, law, other professional and relevant fields, and from the experience of people who use services.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

06

Critical reflection and analysis

Apply critical reflection and analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision-making.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

07

Skills and interventions

Use judgement, knowledge and authority to intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support, prevent harm and enable progress.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

08

Contexts and organisations

Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing organisational contexts, and the social and policy environments that shape practice. Operate effectively within and contribute to the development of organisations and services, including multi-agency and inter-professional settings.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

09

Professional leadership

Promote the profession and good social work practice. Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others. Develop personal influence and be part of the collective leadership and impact of the profession.

How will you work with a student to help them understand the Domain? What might you tell them about or get them to do that is relevant to the Domain and helps them evidence their practice in that area?

ACTIVITY 02

Informal Pre-Placement Meeting

You have been allocated a student and they have made contact with you to arrange a pre-placement visit. Please reflect on the following questions in preparation for the informal pre-placement meeting:

- What is the purpose of the informal visit?
- Will you ask them to bring anything with them to the meeting? If yes, what?
- Will you send them anything in advance of the meeting?
- How do you expect someone to present/what might be a cause for concern at this stage?

Module 2 Preparing the Setting

ACTIVITY 03

Learning Environment

Here are some examples of individuals joining your team — how will you ensure the learning environment is suitable for them?

Make a note of any additional preparations you may need to make to ensure they feel welcome within your team / agency.

01

Olu:

Olu is 31 years old, originally from Nigeria where he worked as a teacher. He came to the UK two years ago and is retraining as a social worker. His written and spoken English are good, but he has limited experience of living in this country.

02

Annie:

Annie is a 24-year-old woman with severe dyslexia. She has a specialist tutor to support her and uses specific computer programmes to aid writing. She has stated that she needs extra time to read complex information.

03

Rofina:

Rofina is a 29-year-old woman of British Asian background. She is a single parent with 2 children under school age. Her mother has dementia, and she is the main carer.

04

Jason:

Jason is a 26-year-old student who is repeating a final level placement following a FAIL recommendation on his first attempt. The previous practice educator's report identified that Jason had difficulty focusing on his placement due to demands on his time from his part-time employment and questioned his value base.

ACTIVITY 04

Learning Opportunities

Learning opportunities:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

If you find that there are gaps in the learning opportunities available, how might you involve other teams or other agencies to help bridge the gaps?

Domain where there are gaps	Opportunities outside my workplace

ACTIVITY 05

Practice Curriculum

We have an example of a practice curriculum that has been drawn up for a Young Carers assessment to ensure the student will know what is expected of them, what timescales they are working towards and how and by whom they are being assessed. If the student is having difficulties, the detail in the curriculum can be increased to ensure the student knows exactly what is required. More detail (smaller or more specific tasks) can help the student gain in confidence as each task is ticked off. The PE could leave the section on links to the PCF blank to encourage the student to self-evaluate and form the basis for discussion in supervision.

Take a look at our example practice curriculum and then work on your ideas for one relevant to your team and the placement you'll be offering a student. Add your ideas to the blank template below.

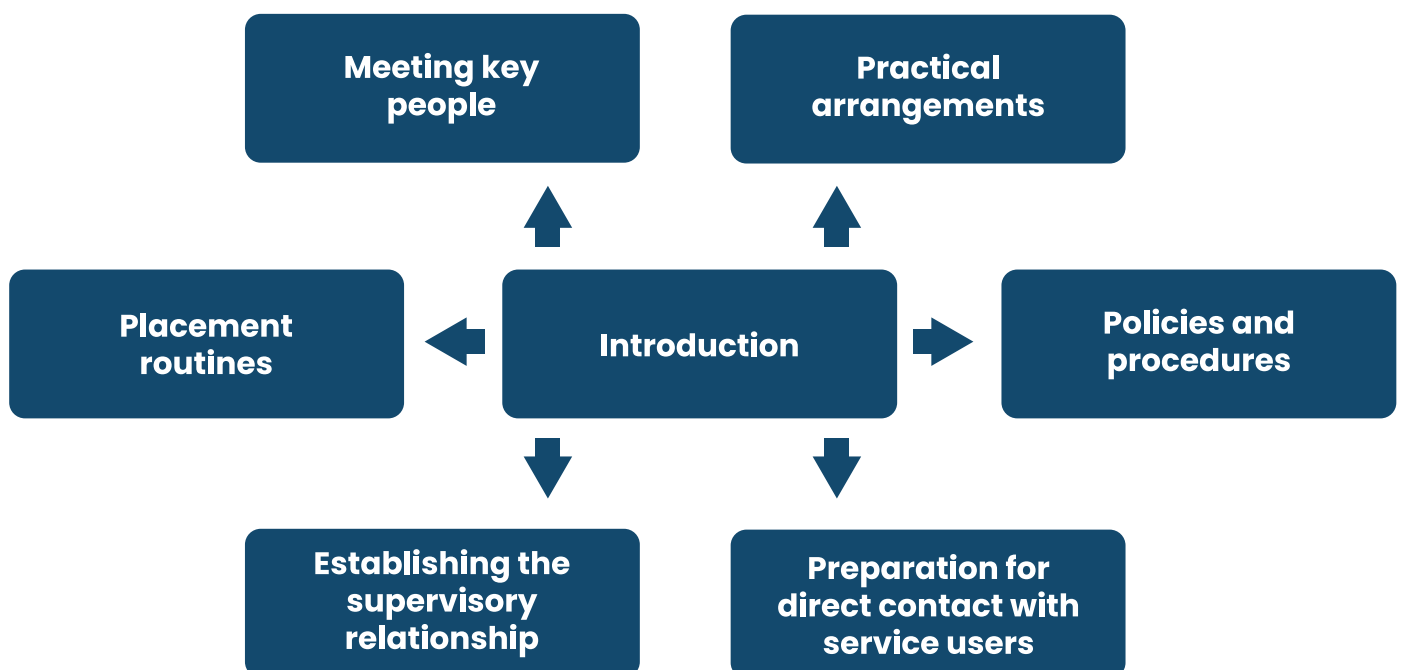
Learning Opportunity	What is being assessed?	Method of assessment	By whom?	By when?	Links to PCF

ACTIVITY 06

Allocation and Induction

How will you manage the allocation of work to the student? Who has the power of allocation in your organisation?

Using the diagram below and the grid on the next page, think about each component of the induction programme for your setting and make a note of the things you want the student to do. Try to be specific — for example, which key people do they need to meet or which policies do they need to read?



Induction Task	Comments
Meet key people	
Practical arrangements	
Placement routines	
Policies and procedures	
Establishing a supervisory relationship	
Preparation for direct contact with service users	

Module 3 Placement Requirements

ACTIVITY 07

Understanding Power

Think about and document your answers on the following questions.

01

**Where does your power as a Practice Educator come from?
And what types of power do you hold?
Think about professional and personal power.**

02

**Students may arrive at their placement feeling powerless.
Think about different factors that could contribute to this feeling.**

03

**How could you share power with a student?
Give specific examples of how you could promote choice, agency and co-production.**

ACTIVITY 08

Discrimination

Consider the following scenarios which look at power issues and how to prevent discrimination towards a student and identify possible responses.

The first two scenarios look at power in the student and Practice Educator relationship, and the final two scenarios look at meeting the specific needs of students and making appropriate reasonable adjustments.

Please take your time to read through each one and answer the questions when you're ready.

Scenario 1

You are a Practice Educator working on a statutory fostering and adoption team. The student on placement with you is a female on a final level placement. She has been making good progress and you feel confident that she can take on work independently. Your supervision sessions have been helpful and productive. During this time, she has told you that her Christian beliefs are the main reason she wants to be a social worker.

Your manager allocates you a case to assess a couple's suitability for fostering. Your student tells you that she would like to 'take the lead' on the case. You pass the file to her. She quickly returns it to you saying that she cannot work on this case as the couple are gay, and this is against her religious beliefs. Furthermore, she is deeply personally offended that you gave her the case, as she feels that she was 'very clear on her views'.

1. What are the power and oppression issues here?
2. How do you address them with the student?
3. What are the implications for the assessment of the student?

Scenario 2

You are supervising a final year international male student on a team working with adults with mental health issues. The student is struggling in practice, and the concerns are:

- Poor communication skills with service users, e.g. not asking exploratory questions and making very superficial assessments
- Case notes not completed on time and not reflecting key information which has been discussed in supervision
- Lack of analytical and reflective skills — the student tends to take everything at face value, not exploring issues or considering alternatives, e.g. when a service user said they had no problems related to substance misuse, he replied, “that’s good to hear”, and did not explore the issue with them in the context of having information which suggested otherwise
- All of these issues have been discussed in supervision, but you are not seeing any improvement having consistently looked at records and observed the student twice in practice

The student does not accept your feedback or assessment. He has stated that your attitude to him is driven by two factors. Firstly, your expectations of him as a student are too high and that you are expecting him to function at the same level as the rest of the team. Secondly, he states that your assessment is underpinned by racism.

1. What are the power and oppression issues here?
2. How do you address them with the student?
3. What are the implications for the assessment of the student?

Scenario 3

(Case Study taken from PEEdS Project, "Best Practice Guide: Disabled social work students and placements", University of Hull, 2005)

Hannah is a first-year social work student with mental health difficulties. She had experienced agoraphobia and acute anxiety for a number of years which she had managed well in the three years before her arrival at university. When she became particularly worried or stressed, she experienced anxiety attacks and her blood pressure would rise. Whilst attending university, a range of support measures were put in place, and with the exception of one occasion when she had needed to leave a lecture, she had successfully completed her first semester. She is therefore now able to start her first placement with an agency providing services for children and families. Like all social work students, she was particularly worried about how she would manage this new and demanding experience.

Several different issues were identified with Hannah by the university disability adviser. She felt that she became very tense in new and / or unusual situations and that this might result in anxiety attacks. She was aware that she would have to meet with service users (people she didn't know) and go to new environments. She did not want to seem like she's not able to cope and wanted to perform well in practice. She was especially concerned that she might experience an attack when she was with a family. Hannah could recognise when an anxiety attack was coming on and usually found that going for a walk and taking 10 minutes out was sufficient for her to manage her anxiety. Stress often exacerbated her condition and she needed to take regular breaks throughout the day to prevent this from building up.

1. What needs to be considered?
2. What reasonable adjustments might be put into place?

Scenario 4

Tom is a first placement student who has multiple sclerosis, which was diagnosed four years ago. Most of the time he is able walk and uses a stick. Tom's energy levels fluctuate, and mornings can be difficult for him. When he is feeling particularly fatigued, he uses a wheelchair to move around, and his speech can be slow. Tom can also have problems concentrating for long periods of time and handwriting can be difficult because of weakness and occasional tremors in his hands. He tends to use an electronic tablet to make notes for himself. Every day can be different in terms of how Tom feels and what he is able to do and what is more challenging for him.

Tom is able to drive and has a car which he will use for placement. He is able to use a computer proficiently and uses an electronic tablet for doing most things in his personal life.

1. What needs to be considered?
2. What reasonable adjustments might be put into place?

How could you work with a student to identify and understand the impact of discrimination / oppression, to address any issues and to challenge where appropriate?

The following roles may be available to support you with these issues:

- Manager
- Management Committee
- Colleagues
- University
- Professional Body
- Trade Union
- Staff and student support groups

ACTIVITY 09

Social work values

Social work values suggest that each person is valued as an individual. Think about your anti-oppressive approach as a social work practitioner and how this can be transferred into your role as Practice Educator.

Think about how you will actively involve service users to develop practice learning opportunities and inform your holistic assessment of the student.

Which resources could you use? Consider Prospera Tadam's MANDELA Model, Burnham's Social GRACES and the Anti-Racist Placement Template.

Are there other resources you are aware of?

ACTIVITY 10

SWE Professional Standards

Consider the following scenarios and decide whether they breach one or more of the SWE Professional Standards.

01

Tony, a 24-year-old student in a children and families team, gets to know Hannah when she is 16 and living in a children's home. He becomes friendly with her and wants to maintain the friendship when the placement ends. They exchange contact details and plan to meet up shortly after Tony has finished placement.

Is this a breach of SWE Professional Standards? (Yes / No)

Which Standard(s)?

How would you respond as a PE?

02

Suraya is coming to the end of her placement with a social work team for older people when a service user gives her a gold bracelet to say 'thank you' for all her hard work. She says she has no one else to leave it to. Suraya accepts the bracelet and wears it to work the next day.

Is this a breach of SWE Professional Standards? (Yes / No)

Which Standard(s)?

How would you respond as a PE?

03

You are on a night out with colleagues from work. Your student is chatting with members of the team when you hear her talking about service users in a derogatory way. She mentions one service user by name.

Is this a breach of SWE Professional Standards? (Yes / No)

Which Standard(s)?

How would you respond as a PE?

04

Daniel, a third-year social work student, regularly arrives for work late. One day he doesn't turn up for work at all. At 11am you receive a phone call from his partner to say he is unwell. You then discover he was due to carry out a home visit at 9:30am.

Is this a breach of SWE Professional Standards? (Yes / No)

Which Standard(s)?

How would you respond as a PE?

05

Ashraf is shadowing one of your colleagues on a home visit. The session is focusing on reviewing a care plan. Your colleague returns to work and advises you that she noticed that Ashraf was using his mobile phone to access 'Facebook'. She did not draw attention to it during the home visit and now feels too uncomfortable.

Is this a breach of SWE Professional Standards? (Yes / No)

Which Standard(s)?

How would you respond as a PE?

ACTIVITY 11

Supervision History (Adapted from Morrison, 2005)

Previous Supervisor	What helped? e.g. style, skills, values, use of authority, empathy, knowledge, focus, etc. Were factors of gender, race or religion significant?	What hindered? e.g. style, skills, values, use of authority, empathy, knowledge, focus, etc. Were factors of gender, race or religion significant?	How did I respond at the time?	What is the influence on me now?

ACTIVITY 12

Student Supervision

Do you think there are any differences between supervision of an employee and supervision with a student?

How might these impact on how you supervise a student?

Write down some thoughts.

Do you think there are any basic principles which need to be in place for effective student supervision?

Make a note of these.

ACTIVITY 13

Dealing with issues which may arise in supervision

Look at the following scenarios and consider how you would approach each situation with the student.

Scenario 1

Your previous supervision session with this student went very well. You allocated a new case to them and agreed action points and time scales. However, the student is now offering excuses as to why the actions have not taken place. The student hasn't contacted the service user and has been unable to gather relevant information. You have become aware that the student seems quite timid, e.g. they struggle to make their views known in team meetings and are reluctant to use the phone when others are present.

How might you address the issues with the student? What are the potential implications? What could help the situation?

Scenario 2

The student has been to visit a service user and undertaken an assessment of needs. To fund the package of care required, they need to write a formal report to the agency resource panel. The format and content of the report was discussed in supervision and the student appeared to have understood what was expected. When the report was written, you were unhappy with the format, content, and style.

How might you address the issues with the student? What are the potential implications? What could help the situation?

Scenario 3

Despite careful agenda preparation with the student, they are never ready for the session and often have not addressed work agreed in the previous supervision session. When you challenge the student about case recordings not being completed, the session turns into a long moan about the amount of work they have to do whilst on placement and academic work for university. When they have not been able to achieve their goals, they blame everyone but themselves.

How might you address the issues with the student? What are the potential implications? What could help the situation?

ACTIVITY 14

Supervision Contract Discussion

Consider the following example of a Supervision Agreement, is there anything you would change or add to this?

Name: _____

Date: __/__/__

Most supervision policies include a contract between the supervisor and the supervisee. When the supervisor and supervisee hold similar expectations of supervision; the casework experience is richer and more pleasant for both.

Aim

To help supervisor and supervisee understand one another's expectations of supervision.

Application

This tool can be used to explore and agree the key activity areas of supervision, which can then form the basis of the supervision contract.

Instructions

Discuss each of the aspects of supervision below and record the key outcomes of the discussion in the blank box.

Areas for discussion	Details of agreement reached
Supervision arrangements	
Purpose: What is the purpose of supervision, from the point of view of the organisation, the supervisor and the supervisee?	
Frequency, location, and duration: When does supervision occur? Where does supervision occur? How long is each session?	
Cancellation: Under what circumstances may supervision be cancelled? What about interruptions?	
Agenda: Who prepares the agenda? How long before the session should it be available?	
Confidentiality: What information will be shared outside of supervision and with whom?	
Recording: What will be recorded? Where, when how and by whom? When will it be shared? Where will it be stored?	

Review: How often will the supervision contract be reviewed? How will the effectiveness of supervision be measured?	
Management function	
What information will be required about cases to inform oversight of decision-making? Who will bring the information? In what format?	
How much time should be spent on casework discussion at each supervision session? Where should it come in the agenda?	
What support should be offered in supervision for managing workload and prioritizing tasks?	
How can the supervisee demonstrate effective outcomes in casework activity? How can the supervisor explore these?	
What will support the supervisee to make good decisions through critical exploration of casework (including learning style, resources, tools to support analysis)?	
Support function	
Has a supervision history been shared?	
Where will discussions about supervisee's feelings around work-related issues be recorded? How will any impact on the quality of work be explored and recorded? Who else might they be shared with?	
Asking for help: How can the supervisor be helpful to the supervisee? How does the supervisee seek help?	
Personal issues: What sorts of issues might be expected to be brought to supervision by the supervisee regarding their life beyond the workplace? Where will they be recorded? How will any impact on the quality of work be explored and recorded? Who else might they be shared with?	
Conflicts within the team: How will any issues affecting team relationships and functioning be dealt with? How will they be recorded? Who else might they be shared with?	

How much time should be spent on support discussion at each supervision session? Where should it come in the agenda?	
Development function	
How will supervision support registration, accreditation, and knowledge and skills requirements? What will the supervisee need to bring to supervision?	
How will the supervisee be supported to gain knowledge and skills required to manage their caseload? Where will these agreements be recorded and how will they be supported and monitored?	
What helps the supervisee learn? What helps the supervisor to understand?	
How will the supervisee be supported to explore and develop areas of interest and career development opportunities?	
How will the supervisee share knowledge and skills gained through learning and development activities?	
Where will discussions around development be recorded? How will development be reviewed? Who will this be shared with?	
How much time should be spent on development discussion at each supervision session? Where should it come in the agenda?	
Mediation	
How will any conflict between supervisee and supervisor be dealt with? Who will be the most appropriate third person to involve in any such disputes? How will that be done? What will be recorded and where? Who else will it be shared with?	
How will any conflict between the supervisee and a service user be dealt with? Who else will be involved in any such disputes? How will that be done? What will be recorded and where? Who else will it be shared with?	
How will any conflict between the supervisee and the organisation be dealt with? Who else will be involved in any such disputes? How will that be done? What will be recorded and where? Who else will it be shared with?	

How will any conflict between the supervisee and professionals in other agencies be dealt with? Who else will be involved in any such disputes? How will that be done? What will be recorded and where? Who else will it be shared with?	
How will feedback about performance concerns be given? When, and where? Should this be part of regular supervision or a separate session? Where will it be recorded? Who else will it be shared with?	
How will feedback about excellent work by the supervisee or supervisor be given? How will it be recorded? Who else will it be shared with?	
How much time should be spent on development discussion in each supervision session? Where should it come in the agenda?	
Any other topics not yet explored?	

ACTIVITY 15

Supervision Agenda

Consider the following example of a Supervision Agenda, is there anything you would change or add to this?

Student Social Worker Supervision Template

Student SW Name:		Number of placement days completed:	
PE/Supervisor Name:		Location:	
Date of Supervision:			

Subject	Discussion	Action/Links to PCF
Health and Well-Being		
<p>Considering -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and mental health • Sleep • Feelings • Stress • Work life balance • Self-care <p>The discussions should include any impact and barriers around protected factors -i.e., race / disability discrimination Support identified / action plan</p> <p>If applicable, discuss Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP)</p> <p>Question to student "Is there any aspect of placement that is keeping you up at night, or waking you from sleep?"</p>		
Absence from Placement – Leave/Sickness		
<p>Points could include -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumstances around absences or sickness. • Check and capture well-being. • Are any absences related to protected characteristics? • Are there any holidays we need to be aware of which explicitly link to race/culture/religion? 		
Other		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT systems • Induction • Expenses • Organisational matters 		

Review of Actions from last supervision		
<p>Considering -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions by supervisor • Actions by student • Information from reflective log 		
Agendas for current supervision		
<p>Considering those from -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Social Worker • Supervisor 		
Workload discussion		
<p>Points and questions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss & agree how placement opportunities are offered, with consideration of learning, growth in knowledge, skills, capabilities. • Discuss background, current circumstances, potential social work interventions, future planning and any work that requires decisions direction and support. • Legal frameworks, policies, values and practice guidance • The needs, wishes and preference of the person. • Address and highlight any emotional impact of the work undertaken on placement. • May discuss an allocation or aspects of work where there has been a positive outcome or learning moments. 		
Student achievements and successes		
<p>Considering -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from those with lived experience • Feedback from supervisor or other professionals • Strengths & achievements 		

Critical Reflection. See suggested tools below to support reflection			
Considering - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions by supervisor • Actions by student • Information from reflective log 			
Agendas for current supervision			
Description of learning opportunity	Key reflections	Links to theories, models, approaches, legal frameworks, policies, or research	Links to PCF
This could include an — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of practice • Multiagency working • Training • A Meeting • A Shadowing opportunity 	What were your feelings (consider any unconscious bias)? What informed your practice? Was there anything you would have changed in hindsight? How have these experiences changed your skills, knowledge, and confidence? How does the experience relate to future learning? (Consider using a reflective model)	Select as appropriate to review through a reflective lens e.g., Poverty / Anti-racist practice / Strengths based practice Might select a social grace — Race, Disability, Gender, Sexuality Values & Ethics	Detail which PCF and any descriptor which could be applicable

Feedback from Supervisor		
<p>Feedback on topics such as recording, assessments, legal literacy, best practice, team player</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate to PCF, SWE standards • Supervisee has a clear understanding from supervisor on performance and expectations, to reduce ambiguity or surprises. • Record rewards and recognition discussions and positive feedback from supervisor and others <p><i>Constructive/compassionate feedback</i></p>		
Feedback from Supervisee (on support arrangements)		
<p>Ensuring feedback is reciprocal. Supervisee could ask for feedback on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision • Relationship • Support • Strengths <p>Question to student <i>"Is there anything that you might want me to do differently that would support you to live well on placement?"</i></p>		
Learning and Professional Development		
<p>Considering —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning styles • Learning opportunities which relate to PCF • Training • Workshops, groups, and peer support • Career progression discussions - strengths / satisfactions and areas of growth / barriers, University, Portfolio, placement meetings 		
AOB		
Student Social Worker sign:		
PE/ Supervisor sign:		
Date set for next supervision:		

ACTIVITY 16

Teaching and Learning

Can you identify some differences between teaching and learning?

To help you, think of a time when you have learnt something new..

- This could be a new hobby or leisure activity, or something in the workplace.
- Consider how you learnt: what was the process that took place? Was there any teaching involved?
- Consider individual differences — would the same learning process have been followed by everyone or could you see how it might vary?

ACTIVITY 17

Learning Styles

This activity will help you to reflect on your own learning style and your role as an enabler for different learners with different preferred styles of learning (based on Beverley and Worsley, 2007).

Read the following case study and answer the questions provided.

Nadia and Seb are students at your workplace.

Nadia is an experienced home care assistant who has worked across a range of different service user groups and is used to making reports to her line manager on the needs of people with whom she works. She tells you that she has “been round the block” having worked in “residential care” for years.

Nadia describes herself as an Activist / Pragmatist.

What might you need to know about Nadia before you make any decisions about your enabling style?

How might you adapt your style of enabling to match Nadia’s needs?

Seb has recently left sixth form college. She volunteered during her spare time in a project providing food and clothing to homeless people. She asks you if she will have to talk to people by herself on placement and wonders if the first placement should be solely based on observation. Seb considers herself to be a Reflector / Theorist.

What might you need to know about Seb before you make any decisions about your enabling style?

How might you adapt your style of enabling to match Seb's needs?

At times, students may encounter blocks to their learning which prevents them from progressing.

Meggison and Boydell (1979) identify four types of learning blocks;

1. Perceptual blocks — not being able to see the wood for the trees
2. Cultural blocks — a belief that there is only one way of doing something
3. Emotional blocks — a fear of making mistakes or looking silly
4. Intellectual blocks — difficulty with handling ideas or concepts

With this in mind, what learning blocks might Nadia have? How could you overcome them?

What learning blocks might Seb have? How could you overcome them?

ACTIVITY 18

Developing a Partnership

Consider how you will develop a learning partnership with your student. This can be a complex situation — for example, the student may be older than you with a wealth of experience as an unqualified worker in the same setting as you, or they may be an MA student who made derisive comments about agency written documentation.

What relevant issues might there be for you?

Think about how you model the development of lifelong learning attitudes within this partnership. How can you promote a culture of learning within your setting?

ACTIVITY 19

Transferrable Skills

What transferrable skills do you bring from your practice which will enable you to carry out the assessment of a student?

What are similarities and what are key differences?

Why do we assess students? What is the purpose?

ACTIVITY 20

Holistic Assessments

“The assessment process and judgement must be trustworthy, reliable, and transparent.”

(TCSW Principles and Conditions for Holistic Assessment, 2012)

Reflect upon this statement for a moment – How can you achieve this?

ACTIVITY 21

Criteria for Assessment

01

Valid

Does it test what it is meant to test?

Question

What would be a valid test to assess a student's capability against PCF Domain 5 (knowledge)?

02

Reliable

Does it build a consistent picture? Can it be trusted to give the same results if the learner is tested more than once and by different assessors?

Question

How could you ensure that the evidence is reliable, and you gain a consistent picture of the student's practice? What factors might affect reliability?

03

Authentic

The work of the person being assessed.

Question

How can you be sure that the work assessed belongs to the student being assessed?

04

Current

Is the evidence up to date?

Question

How can you ensure this?

05

Sufficient

Is it enough? Of sufficient depth?

Question

How do you assess whether or not the student can achieve the same standard again in different circumstances? How do you ensure you have seen enough?

06

Fair

Your assessment methods are unbiased and do not advantage one sort of learner over another.

Question

How do you ensure that your assessment methods are fair and that learners are not disadvantaged?

Remember that assessment is complex, and the Practice Educator and student will be engaged in several cycles of assessment at any one time to build an overall picture of capability.

This should include a number of (depending on level of placement) direct observations of the student interacting with service users.

Reflection point

Think about a time you were given feedback on something you had done — what was helpful, and what was unhelpful?

Write down some thoughts below.

ACTIVITY 22

Direct Observation for Practice

Put yourself into the position of being assessed through direct observation of practice — this is one of the requirements for your Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments.

How might you think, feel, or behave? Try to be as specific as possible.

What do you think are the advantages of using direct observation for assessment? Why do we do it?

Write down three advantages if you can.

How would you prepare for direct observation of practice? How can you reduce student concerns?

ACTIVITY 23

Feedback

You have to give feedback to a learner who doesn't make eye contact with people when she is talking to them.

What is wrong with the following statement?

"You look strange and distant when you're talking to people, no one likes people who can't make eye contact."

(Taken from Williams and Rutter, 2015)

Using the information and principles regarding feedback above, how might you reframe the feedback to be constructive and helpful?

Service user and carer feedback

A service user and / or carer is in a unique position to provide evidence for the assessment process about how the student's work has affected their life. One formal way in which this is done is after direct observation. It's essential to obtain consent from people who are using services before carrying out a direct observation of work with them. It's also important that the service user is prepared appropriately for the observation and giving feedback.

In light of this, what do you need to do to facilitate useful service user feedback about your student following a direct observation? Make a note of useful ideas.

Is there anything specific to your service or service user groups which needs considering?

Are there any other ways you can facilitate and develop service user / carer involvement in the learning and assessment of a student other than the direct observation?

1. How can you involve service users and carers in practice learning?
2. What are the challenges you may face?
3. What are possible solutions?

Make your notes in the table below.

How to involve SU and Carers	Challenges	Solutions

ACTIVITY 24

Interim Review and Holistic Assessment

Read the following case study (taken from Finch, 2017) and consider the questions that follow.

The Interim Review is a formal point in the placement where the Practice Educator draws on the different sources of evidence to formulate their assessment of the student's capability and progress to date. It's an opportunity to identify where the student is doing well and areas where they need to improve.

What evidence would you be able to draw on at this stage in the placement to formulate your judgement of the student's progress?

What do you need to be mindful of when considering the student's progress? How do you know if it's not meeting the required standard?

What kinds of things might indicate that the student is struggling in the placement?

ACTIVITY 25

Identifying difficulties

Read the following case study (taken from Finch, 2017) and consider the questions that follow.

May is a student on a BA (Hons) Social Work course. She is 45 years old and of White British origin. She previously worked for over 15 years as an unqualified youth justice worker in a neighbouring local authority. Her previous experience was in a voluntary agency that supported migrants without recourse to public funds. May is on her final placement in a statutory initial assessment team for children and families. It's now week five and May has three cases assigned to her. One of the cases has a youth offending element but the focus of the social service intervention concerns allegations of domestic abuse by the stepfather towards the mother. May appears focused on the youth offending team (one of the children is known to them) and is highly critical of the youth offending worker. You feel that May is not sufficiently focused on the reason for the referral — that is, the allegation of domestic abuse — evidence by May's home visit to the family during which only issues around the son's youth offending were explored. You also notice that the other two cases assigned to May have not "taken off" in a way you would expect.

What do you do?

- Why do you think May has focused on the "wrong issue"?
- What might May be feeling right now?
- What would your feelings be at this point?
- What would you do to help May refocus?
- What would your strategies be in relation to the other cases where work doesn't seem to be progressing?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being no concerns, 10 being very concerned), how would you rate this situation in terms of whether May is a potentially failing student?

Record your thoughts and potential actions below.

Consider the following update:

It's now week 10 of May's placement. You feel that May presents as a bit of a "know-it-all" and are rightfully concerned that this is a very judgemental position for you to hold. There has been some progress on May's three cases to date, but you feel reluctant to allocate further cases. In supervision, your assessment is that attempts to get May to reflect more deeply on the cases, rather than focus on case management and surface process, have been met with defensiveness. You feel that May doesn't appreciate the importance of reflective practice. May repeatedly responds that she had, in effect, doing social work practice in her previous role for 15 years and just needs the social work qualification to ensure that she is paid appropriately and can progress. May is very clear that she intends to go back into youth offending work when she graduates.

What do you need to do now?

- What would your feelings be at this point (be honest!)?
- What might May be feeling right now?
- What do you think might be some of the underlying causes of May's current approach?
- Why might you be reluctant to give May more cases?
- Would you address the situation of May's motivations for becoming a social worker? If yes, why? If no, why not?
- How would you encourage May to appreciate the importance of reflective practice?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being no concerns, 10 being very concerned), how would you rate this situation in terms of whether or not May is at risk of not meeting the requirements?

Record your thoughts and potential actions below.

ACTIVITY 26

Struggling and failing students

Take a moment to consider what might turn a slight concern that a student isn't reaching the required standards into a definite concern.

Document your ideas about what would indicate that a student is moving from being a struggling student to failing on placement.

Document your thoughts on the following quotes:

"Specific concerns have been raised about the robustness and quality of assessment, with some students passing the social work degree who are not competent or suitable to practice on the frontline" — Social Work Taskforce 2009 in Finch 2017:18

"It's very easy to pass a student but very, very difficult to fail a student" — Duffy (2003) in Finch 2017:11

"Interviewer: What might indicate a student is failing?"

Practice Educator: I don't know...but I'll know when I see it...that's a hard question" — Finch (2010) in Finch 2017:31

ACTIVITY 27

Action Plan

Select an area of concern that you identified from the previous activity and document a potential action plan to address the issue.

For example, if a student is continuously late, what action is needed and how will the student achieve this? If the student is successful in addressing the concern, what would this look like and how soon would you want to see improvements?

Record your thoughts in the action plan template below.

Area for development	Action needed	How they will be achieved	Success criteria	Date for achievement

ACTIVITY 28

Assessment of students

Consider the following questions and document your answers for each scenario you've just explored in the digital learning module.

1. Does this incident call into question the student's capability and continuation on the placement?
2. Is it an area for discussion and a chance to prove they can work differently in the future?
3. Are there any policies or procedures in your organisation that the student has breached that have left the student open to accusations of misconduct and disciplinary action?
4. How does the student's actions relate to the PCF Domains and the placement level descriptors?
 - Can you identify any gaps and name the particular PCF Domain / level descriptor?
 - Can you suggest what might be put in place to help the student meet the relevant PCF Domain / level descriptor?
5. Are there any issues in relation to the SWE Professional Standards?

Record your thoughts for each scenario below.

Sarah

Jameel

Scott

Alison



www.gmswa.co.uk

Acknowledgement: This template has been created by Partners of the Greater Manchester Social Work Academy (GMSWA) which is an amended version of the original British Association of Social Work, Black & Ethnic Minority Professionals Symposium (BPS) & School of Shabs supervision template [Layout 1 \(basw.co.uk\)](http://basw.co.uk) and is used with thanks.