**Social Work Placement and PE/OSS Practice Standard and Quality**

**Assurance**

Northamptonshire County Council want to ensure that students benefit from high quality practice learning experiences, within a range of settings, with opportunities to learn alongside other professionals. It is important that students are appropriately placed within teams supported by qualified practitioners that offers them a wide range of learning opportunities, which will enable them to meet the learning outcomes of that practice placement.

This document outlines the Practice standards and Quality assurance measures that we take to ensure we are meeting the regulatory requirements of Social Work England (SWE) and the Practice Educator Professional Standards for Social Work (BASW)

The purpose of this document and tool is to maintain high standards of practice and to identify and support placement developmental needs.

**Values Statement (BASW Practice Educator Professional Standards for Social Work)**

The value statement below has been adapted from ‘Values for Work-Based Assessors’ Social Work Reform Board (2010). It is the core value statement for Practice Education. The value statement closely reflects the BASW Code of Ethics and the domains of the Professional Capability Framework, particularly the ‘Purpose’ Super Domain which refers to how social work practitioners approach their work. The value statement is central to becoming a practice educator.

**2.1 Statement of Values**

In order to promote anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practices, practice educators and supervisors will:

i. Ensure that consideration is given to the needs and interests of people with lived experience of Social Work when assessing the capability and skills of students at all stages of the assessment process.

ii. Manage professional/personal boundaries, their use of authority and power within the assessment relationship and recognise and act upon the implications for their assessment of practice.

iii. Update themselves on best practice in assessment and research on adult learning and apply this knowledge in promoting the rights and choices of students and managing the assessment process.

iv. Advise students and other learners of their rights and actively challenge oppression and discrimination which may be experienced by the student or other learners.

v. Identify and question their own values and prejudices and respect and value the uniqueness and diversity of students and other learners.

vi. Accept and respect student’s and other learner’s circumstances and understand how these impact on the learning and assessment process. Practice educators and supervisors should recognise and build on student’s and other learner’s strengths and consider individual learning styles and a range of assessment methods (including those preferred by the student).

vii. Assess in a manner that does not stigmatise or disadvantage individuals and ensures equality of opportunity. Show applied knowledge and understanding of the significance of lived experience, poverty, racism, ill health, disability, gender, social class and sexual orientation in managing the assessment process and recognise and work to prevent and counter unjustifiable discrimination and disadvantage in all aspects of the assessment process.

viii. Take responsibility for the quality of their work and ensure that it is monitored and appraised; critically reflect on their own practice and identify development needs in order to improve their own performance, raise standards, and contribute to the learning and development of others.

**Practice Standards**

**Practice Educator Domains (BASW Practice Educator Professional Standards for Social Work)**

Practice educators should be experienced and skilled social workers with at least 2 full years’ post qualifying experience (as a social worker) at the start of the practice education training programme.

i. All practice educators must be registered social workers.

ii. All practice educators should be able to demonstrate that they are practicing at PCF

Experienced Social Worker level in their practitioner role before enrolling on a practice educator course. This is to ensure that practice educators have the appropriate experience and capability to support and guide students through case work complex enough that they are fully prepared for practice by the end of their final placement and sufficiently experienced to meet the requirements of PCF at final placement.

iii. On-site supervisors of learners may be experienced or hold professional qualifications other than social work. If this is the case, there should also be a registered social worker practice educator involved in the learner’s placement.

iv. Practice education programmes may be delivered in one or two ‘stages’ but irrespective of mode of delivery practice educators need to have had responsibility for supporting, supervising and assessing at least two students before full qualification as a practice educator can be achieved.

v. Practice educators at both PEPS 1 and PEPS 2 should meet all Domain statements in Section A, B, C and D. By progressing through PEPS 1 and PEPS 2. The PE trainee should be able to demonstrate an increased competency and reflection as they develop their skills and knowledge for each Domain. (Please refer to Table 1 BASW Practice Educator Professional Standards <https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/peps-for-social-work.pdf> )

**NCC Practice Standards**

**Practice Standards for PE/OSS**

The PEPS outline two stages of progression for practice educators in which all aspects of the role must be undertaken.

**Stage 1**

Practice educators at this stage will be able to supervise, teach and assess social work degree students up to but not including the final assessment prior to qualification. At this stage they may contribute to the last placement but not take full responsibility for assessment or act as the practice educator on a day-to-day basis.

**Stage 2**

Practice educators at this stage will be able to supervise, teach and assess social work degree students up to and including the last placement. In effect, these practice educators will have the authority and capability to recommend, on the basis of appropriate evidence, that social work students are fit to practise at the point of qualification

The PE must provide work, learning opportunities, and support and assist the student to make sense of their learning and assess the learning that takes place. These opportunities must meet the required areas of competence outlined by Professional capabilities framework relating to the level of the qualification that they are working towards.

**Prior to placement**

PE’s/OSS are required to complete a profile and team profile once per year to ensure that all of the information we hold is current and up to date. We need to also have copies of certificate/ letters/emails of passes of PEP’s 1/2/enabling others.

The PE must provide work, learning opportunities, and support and assist the student to make sense of their learning and assess the learning that takes place. These opportunities must meet the required areas of competence outlined by Professional capabilities framework relating to the level of the qualification that they are working towards.

The PE/OSS to complete any paperwork the HEI requires prior to placement commencing.

PE and OSS must meet the student prior to the placement start date. This meeting/interview is arranged by the PE/Onsite supervisor who are responsible for inviting the student in to the meeting. At this meeting the DBS and insurance cover for business use to be checked and recorded.

An initial learning agreement meeting (ILA) or Learning Agreement meeting (LAM) should be arranged once the placement has started. This should be within the first 10 days of the start of the placement.

PE/OSS to ensure that the student is aware of any corporate induction dates and PE/OSS to provide appropriate induction into the area of work that the student has been placed in. (This should be done within 2 weeks)

**During Placement**

PE/OSS should provide regular supervision – this should cover case management, reflection, and teaching. All content should link to the students learning for meeting the PCF. The frequency of supervisions are set out by the HEI. Supervision notes should be signed by student and PE/OSS and a record of supervision should be maintained, as some HEI’s require them to be submitted within the student social workers portfolio. (Please check the HEI handbook)

If the PE is offsite they should ensure that 3 way meetings take place with the student and Onsite Supervisor. This is to review the student’s progress in addressing the PCF, the ILA and maintaining the requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students. There should be at least 3 three way meetings during each placement. If the PE is off site the OSS may conduct one of the observations. This differs for different universities and different for 70 and 100 day

For example 70 day PE has to do both.

**End of Placement**

The PE/OSS should confirm and declare by signing the HEI form, that the student has completed the required number of practice days.

Some HEI’s expect that the PE checks that the portfolio is anonymised.

The PE is expected and required to provide feedback when required by the HEI.

The PE should provide an assessment report on the student and recommend a pass or fail. If the PE recommends a fail they must indicate to the student and HEI on what PCF criteria have not been met. The concerns process for the HEI to be followed at all stages before reaching this final point.

The PE should discuss the report with the student and student comments should be added to the report prior to the portfolio being submitted.

Practice Educators are, at all times, required to follow the requirements of the Standards of Proficiency for social workers in England and conduct themselves in accordance with Social Work England Standards. (<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/>)

PE’s are asked to attend moderation panels and PAP (Practice Assessment Panels) as part of their CPD.

**Maintaining Currency**

PE’s should have students at least once every 2 years to ensure that their practice with students remains current.

PE’s are to take advantage of the free training offered by LA and HEI’s to show continuous CPD and maintain currency as a practice educator. Maintenance of CPD as a PE is a mandatary requirement for HEI’s.

PE’s/OSS’s who are supporting students are required to attend Local PE/OSS forums and forums arranged by the HEI’s. Local forums take place 4 times per year and places can be booked via I learn.

**Quality Assurance of PE’s/OSS’s and Placements**

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| What we are doing? | Why? | What we will do with info? |
| **Practice Educator/OSS**Profiles of PE’ss OSS’s to be reviewed yearly – SWE registration number requested and certificates of PE qualification.Team Profiles are collected and updated yearly | To ensure that PE’s/OSS’s have the relevant social work and PE/OSS To ensure the placement is suitable and provides appropriate learning opportunities, HEI’s may need to complete audits on placements as and when necessary | Information is collated and put on spreadsheet, documents are saved on the secure section of sharepointProfiles are saved to sharepoint |
| **Induction**Providing robust induction for all students at the start of placement | To ensure that students have the information they need when starting placement | Feedback to be obtained from students on the induction at the start of placement and feedback obtained at the end of placement during End of placement reflective session. Induction to be amended if necessary dependent on feedback received. |
| **CPD Opportunities**Themes from PAP panels discussed and further training provided through PE/OSS forumsComplete observations of PE/OSS supervisions with Students – and getting PE’s/OSS to reflectQA of written supervision notes/observations of practiceDip sample of final reports  | To ensure that themes are explored and discussed with PE’sThis is completed during PAP/Moderation panels to look at emerging themes and outcomes. As aboveAs Above | Assessors practice improves based on feedback – this learning loop supports continual improvement and helps assessors to offer good quality support to students during their journey to qualification; this in turn supports best outcomes for vulnerable people they will go on to work with.Feedback to individuals and as a group at PE forums.As AboveAs Above |
| **Feedback from Students**Obtaining feedback from students at least half way through placement and at the end of placement | To ensure students are supported and gaining learning opportunities needed to ensure that they are meeting the PCF’s | Record of meetings saved on sharepoint. Any issues feedback to PE’s/OSS’s either individually or during forums |
| **Feedback from PAP Panels**Obtaining feedback from PAP panels and ensuring this is fed back to PE’s/OSSObtaining individual feedback on PE’s final reports from HEI’s | To ensure that PE’s/OSS are aware themes that come through.To ensure that individual instances of good and poor practice are addressed with PE/OSS | Information recorded and saved on sharepoint.Issues to be feedback to PE’s OSS either individually or during forumsAs Above |
| **Liaison with HEI’s**LA representative to regularly attend meetings with HEI’s | To ensure that information from University is disseminated to the appropriate people, and any issues can be addressed at the earliest opportunity | Information to be fedback to appropriate managers in Children’s First/Northamptonshire Adult Social Services and L&D |