

Internal Policy regarding Student Concerns or Complaints

Student Social Workers are preparing to be autonomous, independent professionals. In their final placement, it is expected that they will take responsibility for informing their Practice Educator or University Tutor of any matters of concern at the earliest opportunity. All members of the training team bear responsibility for maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

The following policy applies;

1. **If the student has ANY concerns or a complaint** about either their Practice Educator or Onsite Supervisor they should discuss their concerns in supervision.
2. **If the student feels that they can't raise the concerns**, due to the inherent power imbalance, they should seek advice (within 3 working days) from another member of the training team.
3. Similarly, if the Practice Educator or placement supervisor has concerns about the student's attitude or behaviour they will raise with the student in supervision in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, the supervisor / educator will consult their manager, and the practice learning organiser will be informed. An initial attempt will be made to resolve the issue within the team, and the practice educator, practice learning organiser, and the link tutor will be informed of the outcome of the discussion within one week.
4. **If the concern is not resolved**, a training team meeting will be convened by the practice educator within 5 working days. The meeting will be attended by the student, Practice Educator, Onsite Supervisor and the link tutor. If the student has raised a concern about the supervisor or practice educator, the Manager of the individual whom the student is raising concerns about should also attend. The student may wish to bring an advocate /supporter into the meeting.
5. Where there are concerns that may result in fitness to practice concerns that have been raised by the LA, this meeting should be chaired by the Principal Social Worker who manages student placements.
6. Contemporaneous notes of the meeting are to be taken and distributed to everyone who has attended the meeting. Action points need to be agreed by all parties by the end of the meeting.
7. If the meeting cannot resolve the issues, then the Course Leader and Principal Social Worker are to be informed within 24 hours. The Course Leader and Principal Social Worker can arbitrate to achieve a resolution.
8. If, following the meeting, a placement breaks down, the placement will be ended. It will not be expected that another placement will be offered in another team within this local authority.

All student supervisors, practice educators, students and link tutors need to be made aware of this policy prior to the commencement of placements