



Placement Agreement Meeting

The placement agreement meeting should be attended by the student, Practice Educator, Placement Supervisor (if there is one) and Link Tutor. It should take place within the first two-four weeks of the placement. This agreement is, effectively, the contract that underpins the placement. The purpose is to clarify the arrangements, opportunities to support a student's learning and confirm the date of future meetings.

However, it should be recognised that the purpose of the placement is to provide a student with the opportunity to learn new skills and evidence the capabilities, knowledge and values of social work at the relevant Professional Capability Framework level. The type of work and the tasks should reflect the expectations of the level of the placement.

Once agreed and signed by all members of the training team a PDF copy should be placed in the relevant section on Mahara.

Placement Profile

The student should complete the four sections on Mahara prior to the Practice Learning Agreement Meeting. This should provide a brief overview of the agency, the services provided and tasks undertaken by the placement provider including, where appropriate, specific legal 'duties' that an agency has relating to social work. Opportunities for inter-professional and inter-agency working should be identified. Anti-oppressive practice is an essential component of all professional social work practice and placements will present their own challenges. These should be outlined here. The student should be prepared to discuss the content during the meeting and should have these available, printing them off if need be.

Guidance on completing the Placement Agreement Form

Details page

This confirms details of the training team members. All written communication between the training team members must be via the student's and Link Tutor's University email addresses only. The student should produce their copy of DBS paperwork for scrutiny at the meeting irrespective of whether this has been seen by the placement provider beforehand.

Placement dates

Should reflect the key dates in this handbook except where placements have commenced late or the student has automatic mitigating circumstances. In these circumstances relevant adjustments to the dates must be recorded accurately. It is good practice to set further placement meetings in advance and to avoid, wherever possible, changing these dates once set.

Whilst placements provide valuable learning opportunities and students are encouraged to make optimum use of these, only essential training required to enable the student to complete agency tasks should be undertaken during the placement. This should be clearly detailed. Similarly the student should be treated as a full member of the team and is expected to participate in all the usual team events e.g. team meetings or development days.



Student transferable knowledge, skills and experience

All students bring with them life skills and experience that will be transferable. Students should be encouraged to discuss what they are bringing to their practice in terms of their personal history, experience and values and how these, together with newly acquired knowledge, may impact on their learning needs and professional development. This should also be explored in relation to the development of decision-making and anti-oppressive/anti-discriminatory practice.

Personal Development Plan

In adopting the concept of a learning partnership it is important to establish the student's learning needs at the very beginning of the placement. Students are encouraged to use the Professional Capability Framework to assist with this but more importance should be placed on the learning needs and opportunities provided by the agency and how this then links to the capabilities. Whilst the student is responsible for identifying and responding to learning opportunities throughout the placement, the student, Practice Educator, Placement Supervisor and Link Tutor should identify how learning needs can best be met, the outcomes sought and record this in a SMART format.

Title to be used by the student

Service-users have the right to know the status of the person they are in contact with. As social work is a protected title by law, the student should discuss with their Placement Supervisor the title to be adopted. "Student social worker" or "trainee social worker" are acceptable titles endorsed by the HCPC.

Work days, hours and lunch arrangements

The placement is based on a full-time working week, generally 37 but no less than 35 hours per week Monday and Friday. Students are expected to work the operating hours of the placement setting which are commonly 7.5 hours between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Whilst many agencies offer flexible working arrangements, students should not commence work prior to 8.30 a.m. or finish after 5.30 p.m. unless shift patterns operate. Shorter or longer working hours should not be negotiated in order to accrue TOIL (see below).

If a placement requires a student to work shifts, either late evening or over the weekend, this must be discussed and agreed with the LT and/or Module Tutor. Students would normally be expected to sample a small number of different shift patterns, never undertaking overnight shifts, over the course of the 70/100 days. In accordance with the EU Working Time Directive (2003) students must take one uninterrupted 20 min break during a six hour work period (www.gov.uk) as a minimum. The actual time taken for breaks will align with agency policy and practice.

In the event that a student occasionally needs to work outside of the main operating hours to deal with personal matters, for example medical appointments, these should be agreed with the Placement Supervisor and team manager in accordance with agency policy.

If there is a need to work in excess of the normal operating hours in order to deal with a work-related emergency this must be agreed by the team manager beforehand wherever possible. If this is not possible the team manager/Placement Supervisor. must be notified before continuing with any work task. In all circumstances, the notified person is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is conducted and control measures covering support, back-up and reporting in arrangements are implemented. Although it is an unlikely event, students **must** ensure that they have an 11 hour break between finishing work on one day and resuming work on the next.

Any additional time worked should be exceptional (see above paragraph) and counted as time off in lieu (TOIL). This should be taken back within one working week. Any additional hours should be recorded on the attendance sheet on the day (although still counted in the overall total as 1 day) and the reclaiming of TOIL clearly evidenced by a shorter working day when taken e.g. 9.0-1.00 p.m. (still counted as 1 day)

Students are not permitted to build up TOIL in order to take additional days off from the placement.

Students are not permitted to work from home (except in adverse weather conditions, please see below) other than for a study period.

Absence

All absences must be made up.

Students should notify their Placement Supervisor/Practice Educator or the team/agency manager, by 9.30 a.m. if they are going to arrive late or be absent for any reason. Students seconded to the degree by their employer must also notify their line manager in accordance with normal practice. Students should document any absences by recording an A in the Day No column. **If the student is absent due to illness they must self-certify using the Self Certification Form (available on Moodle) and return this form to the Module Tutor.**

If a student is absent for 3 consecutive days or where the total numbers of days absent total more than 3 the Module Tutor must be notified. The Module Tutor will consider any arrangements that need to be made to ensure completion of placement, including submission arrangements. Where the student needs to, they must apply for mitigating circumstances through **Helpzone. Only they and the School's Senior Tutor can agree extensions to hand in dates in accordance with University policy on mitigating circumstances.** Students are reminded that they will need to use the Self Certification Form as evidence to support any application of up to a week. Medical evidence will be required when the absence for health reasons exceeds seven consecutive days including weekends.

Caring/Compassionate Leave

If a student has a dependant they have a right to a reasonable amount of time off to deal with an emergency (sudden illness or accident) to make alternative care arrangements. As there is no legal definition of 'reasonable' this must be agreed by the team manager in line with agency policy. If absence lasts longer than 3 days due to inability to make alternative arrangements the Module Tutor must be notified and processes followed in line with sickness absence.

If a student needs to seek compassionate leave of longer than a day they should discuss the situation with the Practice Educator who will liaise with the team manager. Once agreement is secured, the student should contact the Module Tutor to discuss the likely period of absence, alternative arrangements to secure completion of the placement and consider the need for alternative submission arrangements, in line with guidance on absence above.

Adverse weather conditions

If an agency is closed because of weather conditions or travel hazards students are advised to seek guidance from their Placement Supervisor. Consideration can be given to the student using this time as a study day or TOIL if they have accrued this. If none of these are

possible the day(s) must be counted as an absence and arrangements made for these to be made up in accordance with absence guidance.

Study Time

Students are allowed 3.5 hours (half day) study leave per week for placement related or other academic work (e.g. dissertation at Level 6). Students may take this as 1 day per fortnight. Study time should be clearly recorded as 'S' on the **Attendance Form**. Students who have additional support meetings at the University should use this study time to arrange these meetings (agreed with the Disability, Dyslexia and Learning Support Service).

Dress code

As a representative of the agency offering a placement, albeit on a temporary basis, students should conform to agency expectations. Any particular dress codes should be indicated: for example the sort of clothing considered appropriate by the agency when the student is attending court, drop-in sessions, case conferences, ward rounds.

Security arrangements

Details should be confirmed about arrangements and use of ID badges, key fobs, codes and other security related matters.

Customer service standards

The agency policy on customer service and communication standards should be clear, including details on how to respond to telephone calls, personal use of agency telephones and postal arrangements.

Information and computer technology

It is useful if any agency training is arranged and undertaken as early as possible in order that students can begin to record their work. Students should not use, or be encouraged to use, other staff passwords in any circumstances. It is particularly important that information security arrangements and agency policy on use of ICT are read and understood by the student as part of induction, preferably within the first week.

Travel arrangements

All eligible students (not those from another UK country) receive a travel allowance from the NHS Financial Services Authority which should be used to pay travelling expenses to and from term time residence to the placement and incidental expenses (e.g. parking).

Necessary mileage and other expenses incurred in the course of undertaking duties on behalf of the placement provider should be reclaimed from the agency in accordance with their procedures.

If a student uses their own vehicle for placement related activity (i.e. not just commuting), reference should be made to the guidance on **Use of Personal Vehicles During Placement** regarding car insurance and other matters. Students must provide valid documentation to the placement provider for scrutiny. This includes driving licence, current MOT (if the vehicle is more than 3 years old) and insurance certification which clearly meets the needs of the placement.

Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure that their vehicle remains roadworthy for the duration of the placement. It is their responsibility to ensure that they feel prepared and safe to transport service users (children, young people or adults) if asked to do so, including that any appropriate risk assessment is undertaken beforehand and that

they are covered by the agency insurance policies to do so.

Risk assessments will generally be completed using the individual placement provider Lone Working policy, but should broadly cover the following areas:

- Work factors – nature of the task to be undertaken, whether any equipment is needed to aid the transportation, the service user or family e.g. substance misuse, homeless, prone to challenging behaviour, aggression or violence.
- Travel factors – length of driving experience of the student, student familiarity with the geography of the area and route, time of the day, weather conditions.
- Location – how removed from the main place of work will the student be, personal safety and security means of communication in an emergency (e.g. mobile phone availability and connectivity in remote areas), availability of additional support or emergency services if needed.
- Personal factors – does the student have any health condition or protected characteristic, the knowledge and skill level of the student to undertake the work.
- Safety factors – is any specific training needed, e.g. fitting safety seats, first aid equipment, de-escalation techniques, reporting in arrangements.
- Control factors – working in pairs where possible, use of calendar and in/out boards for whereabouts and timescales, reporting in arrangements, nominated person to follow up, reporting of incidents.

If the student has access to vehicles owned by the agency, any specific training required to enable them to drive such vehicles and confirmation of relevant insurance cover should be indicated. Alternative methods of transport and reimbursement of those costs should be recorded.

Parking arrangements should be explicit. The placement provider should ensure that any necessary administrative arrangements have been made (e.g. obtaining passes or automatic number plate recognition) where applicable. The course will not pay for any parking fees or fines incurred by the student whilst on placement.

Equality Arrangements

Please refer the Equality Act and Reasonable Adjustment guidance on completion of this section.

Induction

Thompson (2006 cited in Field, Jasper and Littler, 2014, p.44) refers to two different type of learning, organisational and social. Organisational learning relates specifically to the learning culture within the organisation or team whilst social learning is influenced by previous experiences of learning.

Induction is essential; introducing the student to the agency, its role, policies, structure, responsibilities, culture and boundaries. Induction may also include familiarisation with the local community and its particular profile and needs. Students are only with the agency for a relatively short time. The sooner they feel comfortable within the agency, the quicker they will be able to function as a practitioner and the more effective their learning will be.

Many agencies have an established induction procedure, which can be tailored to the precise needs of the individual student. The student should establish, with their Placement Supervisor, what prior knowledge and skills they are bringing to the placement to inform the learning opportunities that induction might initially provide. There may well be aspects of the

induction, such as visits to particular establishments, which the student will be able to organise and undertake on their own, but the Placement Supervisor, as the agency representative, is responsible for arranging a framework to the student's induction.

Supervision

The Standards for Employers of Social Workers (2014) recognises that supervision is an integral part of social work practice, starting from being a student. For a student, supervision should include educative, support, management and assessment elements.

Supervision contract(s) with the Placement Supervisor (if separate) and Practice Educator must be agreed and signed (refer appendix 5 for exemplar although use is not compulsory). Where the role is combined only one contract is necessary but should clearly differentiate between the different types of supervision. The Placement Supervisor should provide a minimum 1 hour individual supervision every week focusing on workload and tasks. The Practice Educator should provide a minimum of 1½ hours individual supervision every fortnight focusing on the integration and application of theory, legislation, methods of intervention and evidence based practice. Both should document student achievement against the Professional Capability Framework domains throughout the placement.

Best practice is to arrange all supervision dates at the start of the placement. Supervision should only be cancelled in exceptionally urgent and pressing circumstances and, in such circumstances, another session arranged within two working days. It is essential that supervision sessions are uninterrupted, in a quiet location and on agency premises. Thought should be given as to how this can be achieved within the confines of a busy agency. The supervision agenda should be set by mutual agreement and thought given to whether there is a consistent agenda with opportunities for other business to be added or whether the agenda is set each time. A suggested recording supervision template is available on the website but agencies are permitted to use their own.

It is **never** the student's responsibility to record formal supervision notes, although they should take their own notes to progress their work. The Placement Supervisor/Practice Educator should ensure that a written record, which may be handwritten, with clear actions identified is provided within two working days. **Where it is a requirement for casework discussions and/or decisions to be recorded on computer based client records** the recording should be identical on both supervision notes and client records.

In the event that students do not routinely receive supervision they should raise this with their Placement Supervisor/Practice Educator in the first instance and Link Tutor if no improvement is secured.

Additionally there will be informal contact and guidance during the week. Clear guidelines should be given as to when and how the student may contact their Placement Supervisor/Practice Educator (whether on or off-site) outside of formal supervision. It is also important for the student to know to whom they should refer to in the absence of their Placement Supervisor/Practice Educator, especially in situations where they may need immediate help with a difficult situation. It is possible to name a colleague. This should be negotiated with the team as a whole.

Expected workload

The purpose of the placement is to provide the student with the opportunity to learn new skills and fulfil the capabilities, knowledge and values of social work at the relevant level of the Professional Capability Framework. In order to achieve this, the student will require time

to reflect on what they are doing and should be given a workload that builds to approx. 25% of a new member of staff (for 70 day placement) and newly qualified social worker (for 100 day placement).

It is difficult to be precise as to the exact nature of the work, as this will vary with the type of work undertaken by the agency. It may be appropriate for a student to take over existing work from their Placement Supervisor or another worker within the team, where a fresh approach might be seen as beneficial to the service-user. This will have the advantage that the Practice Educator may be very familiar with the demands likely to be made but may have the disadvantage that the service user will experience a change of worker. Further adjustments may also be required when the student leaves at the end of the placement, especially if the service-user has become accustomed to the time and attention that a student can give. A student could also benefit from being given new work, especially where an assessment is required, so that they can follow a service user through their contact with the agency. Whilst a student may eventually take a lead role in an assessment and on-going intervention they should never be the nominated and accountable lead professional/case holder.

Whilst the student needs to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the practice requirements, it is not always possible to produce such opportunities to order. Therefore, it helps to have established the level at which the student is to operate and to manage the allocation of work accordingly. Students should be encouraged to develop and stretch their potential: however, whilst on-going support and encouragement is essential, they should not be over-protected, as some degree of stress is inevitable in the process of learning and is intrinsic to social work as a profession.

Key practice policies

It is important to keep safe while on placement and to avoid any unnecessary risks. Due to the varied range of placements it is not possible to provide detailed guidance. However, it is essential that students acquaint themselves with their placement agency's health and safety and lone working procedures and that these are discussed as part of induction and confirmed during the placement agreement meeting. It may not be possible for the student to have read all of the policies listed by the placement agreement meeting but those that have been should be signed and dated. It is not acceptable for the same date to be listed against all policies, some can be signed off as the placement progresses

Confidentiality statement

It is essential that all members of the training team read this prior to signing the form. This may be used as evidence in any matter that is subsequently brought to the attention of the Module Tutor or CL. Failure to adhere to the requirements may lead to the invoking of other University or agency procedures as applicable to the circumstances.

Where the form is agreed on the day it should be signed by all parties before the meeting closes. A PDF copy of the signed form should be circulated to all signatories and the Module Tutor (where different) electronically. The PDF should be uploaded to the relevant section of the portfolio on Mahara by the date of the Mid-Point Review. Where additions or adjustments to the form are required, the student should make the amendments, secure the signatures of the Placement Supervisor (where there is one) and Practice Educator and take this to the first recall day for signature by the Link Tutor They should then follow the guidance for uploading.

Practice Learning Agreement

Student details	<p>Name:</p> <p>Tel no:</p> <p>Mobile no:</p> <p>Email: <i>This must be University email address and only this email address used for correspondence</i></p> <p>DBS number and date of issue/update:</p>
Practice Educator	<p>Name:</p> <p>Tel no:</p> <p>Mobile no:</p> <p>Email:</p> <p>HCPC Registration number: SW</p> <p>Onsite: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Date registered for or achieved relevant PEPS stage or equivalent:</p>
Placement Supervisor	<p>Name:</p> <p>Tel no:</p> <p>Mobile no:</p> <p>Email:</p> <p>HCPC Registration number (if applicable) SW</p> <p>Date registered for or achieved relevant PEPS stage or equivalent:</p>
Team Manager	<p>Name:</p> <p>Tel no:</p> <p>Mobile no:</p> <p>Email:</p>
Placement Provider	<p>Name:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Tel no:</p>
Link Tutor	<p>Name:</p> <p>Tel no:</p> <p>Mobile no:</p> <p>Email: <i>This must be University email address and only this email address used for correspondence</i></p>

Placement Dates	
Start date	
End date	
Mid-point Review Meeting	
Final Placement Meeting	
Portfolio submission date	<i>Ensure you include any automatic extension allowed</i>

Detail any essential agency training	
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Transferable knowledge, skills and experience of the student (making reference to previous placements, work experience and knowledge from University modules)	
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Personal Development Plan			
Student's self-identified learning need	Learning opportunities to meet	Outcome to be demonstrated	Professional Capability Framework Domain to be met

Practical Arrangements		
Agency Health and Safety Declaration	Date completed: Date submitted to the Placement Administration Team:	
Title to be used by Student:		
Work days:		
Hours of work:		
Lunch arrangements:		
Procedure for notifying absence:		
Arrangements study leave		
Dress code:		
Security and administrative arrangements	Agency ID card arranged including no (if appropriate):	
	Key fob, key code or other access arrangements required:	
	Telephone:	
	Mail/post:	
	Seating arrangements:	
	Computer available:	
	Email available:	
Agency IT policy	Signature of student	Date read
Data protection policy	Signature of student	Date read
Agency policy on use of social media	Signature of student	Date read

Travel Arrangements	
Student's driving licence	Date seen: Note any issues:
Student vehicle MOT certificate	Date seen: Note any issues
Student's car insurance	Date seen: Note any issues
Car parking arrangements	
Transportation of service users	<i>Please identify any/the expectations of the student responsibilities in relation to this, e.g. frequency, distance, and the training and risk assessment processes employed in allocation.</i>

Other transport availability	
Arrangements for Reclaiming mileage expenses	

Equality Arrangements

Does the student have a disability or particular learning need that should be considered	Yes [] No [] Please specify:
If so, what reasonable adjustment should be considered or has been agreed	Please specify:
Does the student have any other needs (e.g. religious, ethnicity, cultural that should be considered)	Yes [] No [] Please specify:
If so, what arrangements can be put in place or have been agreed	Please specify:
Does the student have any caring responsibilities that should be considered	<i>Note: as defined by the Carers Services and Recognition Act 1995, Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, and Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004</i> Yes [] No [] Please specify:
If so, what arrangements can be put into place or have been agreed	Please specify:

Induction Arrangements

Date the Practice Educator viewed the Level 4 Readiness to Practice or Level 5 portfolio?		
Other support arrangements e.g. a mentor		
Visits to partner agencies/networks arranged		
Shadowing of other personnel undertaken or arranged		
Supervision contract completed (refer recommended template in placement handbook)	Practice Educator Date:	Placement Supervisor (if applicable) Date:

Expected workload:	
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Key Practice Policies			
<i>Please confirm that the following agency policies have been read and is understood by the student (signatures and dates to be added when done although the priority is for the Health and Safety and Lone working policies)</i>			
	Date read	Signature of student	Student Understanding confirmed by:
Health and Safety policy			
Lone and/or joint working			
Information sharing			
Equal Opportunities/ Equality and Diversity policy			
Agency code of conduct			
Agency complaints policy			
Bullying and Harassment policy			
Agency whistleblowing policy			
Student support on whistleblowing.	<i>Please indicate how the student can be supported to report poor practices through the whistleblowing policy.</i>		

Confidentiality principles
<p>All parties to this learning agreement must always be aware of the confidentiality of information gained during the course of their respective duties which, in many cases, includes access to personal information relating to service users, carers and other professionals. It is required that all parties understand the important of treating this information in a discreet and confidential manner and attention is therefore drawn to the following:</p> <p>The student must disclose if service users are family members or are known to them. Students must not use any audio or visual equipment (e.g. camera, mobile phone, tablet, Dictaphone, data stick or tape recorder) without the written consent of everyone involved. 'Everyone' includes service users, carers, professionals and the team manager or agency responsible for the placement. Information regarding service users and carers (including any service user feedback) must not be disclosed orally or in writing, including in email, to unauthorised persons.</p> <p>Conversation relating to service users, carers, other professionals and those involved in this agreement should not take place in situations where they may be heard by passers-by i.e. in corridors, reception areas, lifts etc.</p> <p>Written case records, paperwork and other documentation relating to service users and 'owned' by the agency should remain on their premises at all times. Copies must not be placed in any evidence log or portfolio that is taken off premises.</p> <p>Personal disclosures by the student are to be kept between the parties except in relation to health,</p>

capability, fitness to practice or safeguarding concerns. Where concerns of risk or harm override the need to maintain confidentiality, action must be taken within agency and local safeguarding policies.

Documentation required for the portfolio will be fully anonymised in relation to all service users, other professionals or other agencies apart from the agency providing the placement and those of the training team.

Written records and correspondence relating to the placement must be kept secure at all times when not in use.

Personal copies of records, other than supervision notes documenting case decisions, relating to this placement must be destroyed within 6 months of the placement finishing.

Failure to comply with this requirement will result in suspension of the placement pending investigation or the portfolio being returned as a fail.

All concluded investigations have the potential to invoke Fitness to Practice procedures being followed.

Signatures

In signing this Practice Learning Agreement, all parties are confirming:

- that there is no outstanding criminal conviction, charge, caution, safeguarding investigation or disciplinary issue, either in relation to the University or other place of employment or voluntary work, pending.
- that they have read and understand the learning outcomes required by the placement
- that they have read and understood their respective roles and responsibilities
- that they have read and understand the procedures for dealing with disagreements, complaints and areas of conflict
- that they have read and understand the procedures for dealing with concerns
- that they have read and understand the procedures and policies for dealing with whistleblowing, complaints, harassment and discrimination
- that they are aware of and understand the confidentiality principles
- that contact information for all individuals involved in this agreement will not be shared with other individual or agency (other than in situations covered by guidance in the placement handbook or local safeguarding arrangements)
- that all signatures to this agreement will not use contact information provided for any purpose other than pertaining to the placement and the placement requirements.

Signatures	
Student	
Placement Supervisor	
Practice Educator	
Link Tutor	
Date	