



Department of Social Work, Social Care and Youth
and Community Studies

Social Work Practice Learning Roles
and Responsibilities Handbook

Practice Learning Documentation, Procedures and Policies are available on the Sheffield Hallam University practice placement site for students and educators at:

<https://www.shu.ac.uk/health-social-placements>

Introduction

This Handbook has been written to provide an outline of the roles and responsibilities of the placement tutor, student, practice educator and on-site practice supervisor in the context of practice learning and to provide guidance on key aspects of placement. The practice placement is a partnership between Sheffield Hallam University, student and placement provider/practice educator. Developing an effective three way relationship, based on clarity of roles and expectations is essential for positive placement outcomes.

Practice Learning Requirements

Practice learning is central to social work training, with academic learning designed to support practice.

Students will complete 200 days of practice learning, including skills days, and will have different experiences across the placements. Students can expect placements in at least two practice settings, with a minimum of one placement taking place within a statutory setting that can provide experience of statutory social work tasks involving high risk decision making and legal interventions (SWE, 2021)

To meet these requirements, the placement team work collaboratively with placement providers in South Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, and West Yorkshire. Students can be placed in the statutory sector and in diverse settings across the third sector, which allow students to meet the Domains of the Professional Capabilities Framework (BASW, 2018) at first and final placement level.

Students are expected to travel up to two hours to their allocated placement and be available to engage with work on placement on a fulltime basis. A usual placement day would be 9.00 am - 5.00 pm (37 hours per week). Whilst every effort is made to avoid students having to travel long distances, this is not always possible and a student may be placed in any of the following areas:

- Sheffield
- Rotherham
- Barnsley
- Doncaster
- Derbyshire
- Nottinghamshire
- Lincolnshire
- West Yorkshire

Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

Placement Team Responsibilities

- Work with Stakeholders to develop and approve practice learning opportunities.
- Develop and approve practice educators and on-site practice supervisors.
- To ensure practice educators and on-site practice supervisors are trained at the appropriate level.
- Work with stakeholders to allocate the student to the appropriate practice leaning provider.
- Identify an approved independent practice educator if required.
- Send out electronic copies of the Practice Learning Documentation to placement providers and practice educators/on-site practice supervisors.
- Send out an electronic copy of the roles and responsibilities handbook to placement providers and practice educators/on-site practice supervisor.
- Send out practice learning provider confirmation form.
- Receive confirmation forms and raise invoices and payments.
- Provide concerns reports procedures and answer any queries from potential placements, practice educators, on-site practice supervisors.
- Provide termination report procedures and answer any queries from potential placements, practice educators, on-site practice supervisors.
- Update database with regard to placement breakdown and failed students information.

Senior Lecturer Practice Learning Education Responsibilities

Responsibilities

- Work with the Placement Team and placement partners to ensure that students receive high quality practice placements which are properly supervised and assessed.
- Contribute to strategic planning and monitoring of practice learning capacity.
- Work with key stakeholders to develop practice learning provision, that meets Social Work England Education and Training Standards for Practice Placements (SWE, 2021).
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of practice placements through the QAPL (BASW, 2022) evaluation forms completed at the end of placement.
- Support the writing of placement application forms.
- Deliver placement preparation sessions and plan and deliver university placement recall days.
- Contributing to the resolution of difficulties that may arise with students on placement.
- Develop and deliver practice educator training, that meets Practice Educator Professional Standards (BASW, 2020)
- Plan and deliver Practice Educator CPD events.

Placement Tutor Responsibilities

- Read the 'Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations Handbook' and be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of all concerned.
- Take necessary steps to facilitate student and practice educator access to any e portfolios being used.
- Provide clarity to the student, practice educator, on-site practice supervisor and/or placement provider about roles and responsibilities and refer to the Roles and Responsibilities Handbook if required.
- Discuss with the student any issues or circumstances that may impact on the placement (such as the need for Reasonable Adjustments on the grounds of disability) and agree with the student how this will be shared. If the student does not wish to disclose information it is important that the student understands the implications of this decision

and signs the RA Form. Either way, relevant paperwork should be completed and submitted with the Practice Learning Application form.

- Provide the practice educator with relevant information that may impact on the delivery and management of the practice learning experience e.g., learning contract, religious observance needs, dependant needs etc. Information disclosed must be agreed beforehand with the student.
- Chair the initial learning agreement meeting within ten days of the commencement of the practice learning experience. The learning objectives need to be clearly identified and a record made of how these are to be met.
- Provide the written learning agreement reports to the placements, practice educators, on-site practice supervisors and student.
- Work with the student and practice educator to develop a Practice Learning Agreement for the student during the placement. This should meet the learning needs of the student and facilitate the student's professional development.
- Provide relevant information about the academic programme and expectations of the student and share this information at the learning agreement meeting.
- Encourage the student to share their Personal Development Plan with the practice educator.
- Discuss transferrable skills and the wider context of social work with the student.
- Give clear information about expectations of practice learning providers e.g., supervision, direct observations, practice learning documentation within the learning agreement meeting.
- Chair the review of practice review meeting.
- Notify the Senior Lecturer in Practice Education if either the learning agreement meeting or mid way review of practice meeting is outside of the specified timescale.
- Review and monitor the placement, as necessary, to ensure that appropriate learning opportunities are available to support the student's professional development.
- Support placement learning where necessary to enhance the student's learning e.g., reflective practice, application of theory to practice.
- Be available to respond to issues that arise, including concerns where a student may be marginal or failing.

- Convene and chair concerns meetings where indicated and formulate an action plan. Procedures must be clearly followed. It is important that where there are concerns about a student's capability, personal circumstances or delivery of a placement that a concerns meeting is held.
- Be available to conduct follow up action plan meetings where there are concerns.
- Liaise with the Course Leader, Senior Lecturer in Practice Education and Student Support Advisor where indicated.
- Convene and chair a termination meeting and complete the forms; procedures must be clearly followed.
- Inform the Placement Team of any Practice Breakdowns and Terminations and send a copy of the completed Termination Form to each of the following:

o Placement Team

o Senior Lecture Practice Education.

- Verify placement requirements have been met at the end of placement.

Students Responsibilities

It is expected that students undertaking practice learning will:

- Read the 'Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations Handbook'.
- Attend practice learning preparation sessions and the university recall days.
- Understand the practice learning requirements, processes, and the documentation prior to commencing the practice learning opportunity.
- Ensure that previous practice educator report is attached to the placement application form.
- Ensure that any previous concerns reports/action plans are attached to the placement application form and shared with practice educator.
- If applicable, ensure that any learning contracts forms are attached to the placement application form and are shared with practice educator and/or placement provider.
- Arrange a pre placement visit with the placement provider and undertake any preparation required prior to the visit.

- Share Personal Development Plan with practice educator and on-site practice supervisor.
- Liaise with practice educator, on-site practice supervisor and placement tutor.
- Make practice educator, on-site practice supervisor and/or placement provider aware of expectations at learning agreement meeting.
- Show a commitment to the practice learning experience and to learning for the duration of the placement.
- Conduct needs to be professional, as defined by Social Work England Professional Standards (SWE, 2019), and in accordance with policies of the placement agency.
- Prepare for the Learning Agreement Meeting by completing a SMART action plan.
- Attend the Learning Agreement Meeting, Review of Practice Meeting and any other meetings that might be convened during the placement.
- Attend supervision sessions with the practice educator and complete any required tasks.
- Undertake learning as planned by the practice educator.
- Agree a date with the practice educator when the student section of the documentation is to be completed.
- Provide evidence in the Practice Learning Documentation to demonstrate that the requirements of the curriculum have been met and ensure the University Consent and Confidentiality Policy has been complied with.
- Inform the University tutor and practice educator of any issues or concerns that may impact on the progress of the placement, if necessary, involve the Student Support Adviser.
- Engage in the concerns/breakdown procedures where required.
- Engage in the termination procedures where required; you may take a supporter with you.
- If a placement breaks down or is terminated, you still need to complete the Practice Learning Documentation and sign it at the end of the placement and submit it according to university requirements.
- Comply with Professional Issues, and Occupational Health requirements if indicated.

- Ensure that the Practice Learning Documentation is completed and signed at the end of the placement and submitted according to University requirements.
- Report sickness and absence in accordance with agency and University policy.
- Report any accident or injury on placement and ensure the appropriate form is completed and sent to the University.
- Complete a practice learning evaluation form and submit according to instructions.

Practice Educator Responsibilities

- Read the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations Handbook.
- Be available to meet the student prior to the placement commencing.
- Take into consideration the learning needs of the student because of the information provided in a learning contract, concerns report, personal development plan, learning contract forms and the previous practice educator report and undertake a plan of action accordingly.
- Be aware of the curriculum requirements and have a copy of the practice learning documentation.
- Promote anti oppressive and anti-discriminatory practice, underpinned by the Practice Educator Professional Standards Values Statement (BASW, 2020)
- Ensure the student receives a structured induction programme that includes access to relevant policies and procedures, including Health and Safety.
- Attend the learning agreement meeting, review of practice meetings and other meetings that may be required as part of the placement.
- Ensure that sufficient work is available to ensure that the requirements of the curriculum are met and that students can demonstrate capability against Domains of the Professional Capability Framework (BASW, 2020)
- Provide regular supervision - 1.5 hours formal supervision per week. This should be recorded and signed by both parties.
- Support the student's learning and development including reflecting on their learning; facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and application of theory to practice.

- Directly observe the student's practice and complete the direct observation of practice reports according to guidance in the Practice Learning Documentation.
- Work to involve colleagues, service users and carers in the student's learning and assessment.
- Make an overall judgement at the end of the placement and state whether the student has reached the required level of capability against each PCF Domain.
- Prepare and submit a report in accordance with the programme requirements at the end of the placement. If the placement breaks down or is terminated and/or a fail recommendation is given, the report is still required.
- Monitor and assess the student's learning and progress and provide regular feedback to the student. Where there are concerns about the student's ability to demonstrate capability or complete the placement the tutor should be informed immediately.
- Be aware of concerns and break down procedures.
- Engage in the concerns/breakdown procedures where required.
- Inform the Placement Team of Practice Breakdowns and Terminations dates in which the placement ended.
- Engage in follow up and action planning meetings regarding addressing concerns.
- Be aware of, and participate in, termination procedures as a matter of course.
- Complete a practice learning evaluation form once the placement has reached a conclusion.

On-site Practice Supervisor Responsibilities

- Read the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations Handbook.
- Be available to meet the student prior to the placement commencing and organise preplacement meeting.
- Take into consideration the learning needs of the student as a result of the information provided in a learning contract, concerns report, personal development plan, previous practice educator report and engage with practice educator and student with regard to planning practical opportunities.
- Be aware of the curriculum requirements.

- Ensure you have a copy of the Practice Handbook documentation.
- Ensure the student receives a structured induction programme that includes access to relevant policies and procedures, including Health and Safety.
- Attend the learning agreement meeting, review of practice meetings and other meetings that may be required as part of the placement.
- Ensure that sufficient work is available to ensure that the requirements of the curriculum are met.
- Provide day to day support and guidance and case related supervision.

On-site Practice Supervisor Responsibilities

- Read the Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations Handbook.
- Be available to meet the student prior to the placement commencing and organise pre placement meeting.
- Take into consideration the learning needs of the student because of the information provided in a learning contract, concerns report, personal development plan, previous practice educator report and engage with practice educator and student regarding planning practical opportunities.
- Be aware of the curriculum requirements.
- Ensure you have a copy of the Practice Handbook documentation.
- Ensure the student receives a structured induction programme that includes access to relevant policies and procedures, including Health and Safety.
- Attend the learning agreement meeting, review of practice meetings and other meetings that may be required as part of the placement.
- Ensure that sufficient work is available to ensure that the requirements of the curriculum are met.
- Provide day to day support and guidance and case related supervision.
- Provide update information and feedback to practice educator and student.
- Attend regular meetings with the practice educator, and the student.
- Negotiate with the practice educator arrangements to undertake direct observations and contribute to the practice report.
- Work to involve colleagues, and people with lived experience in the student's learning experience.

- Collect feedback reports from colleagues, other professionals and service users and ensure the practice educator and student gets a copy.
- Monitor and assess the student's learning and progress and provide regular feedback to the student. Where there are concerns about the student's ability to demonstrate competence, the practice educator should be approached (in the first instance) and ensuring the university tutor is informed.
- Engage in the concerns/breakdown procedures where required.
- Inform the Placement Team of Practice Breakdowns and Terminations dates when the placement ended.
- Engage in follow up and action planning meetings with regard to addressing concerns.
- Provide update information and feedback to the practice educator either verbal or written for them to include in the final report.
- Complete a practice learning evaluation form once the placement has ended.
- Attend regular meetings with the practice educator, and the student.
- Negotiate with the practice educator arrangements to undertake direct observations and contribute to the practice report.
- Work to involve colleagues, service users and carers in the student's learning experience.
- Monitor and assess the student's learning and progress and provide regular feedback to the student. Where there are concerns about the student's ability to demonstrate capability, the practice educator should be approached (in the first instance) and ensuring the university tutor is informed.
- Engage in the concerns/breakdown procedures where required.
- Inform the Placement Team of Practice Breakdowns and Terminations dates when the placement ended.
- Engage in follow up and action planning meetings with regard to addressing concerns.
- Be aware of termination procedures and engage in the termination procedures where required.

Structure of Practice Learning Meetings

- Pre-Placement Meeting
- Learning Agreement Meeting - to take place within the first ten days of placement.
- Review of Practice Meeting (Midway)
- Concerns Meeting if indicated.
- Termination Meeting if required.

The learning agreement meeting and midway meeting will take place remotely, unless otherwise mutually agreed.

Hours

The required working hours for practice learning BASW and MSW is a 37 hour week (for the ANSW (LD) it is a 37.5 hour week) with 3.5 hours study time, this does not include lunch breaks. A working day will usually be 9am to 5pm, although some placements may have different working patterns. Students need to agree their working hours at the Learning Agreement Meeting, including arrangements for taking lieu time and any reasonable adjustments required.

Students should be discouraged from 'saving study' time to finish the placement early. If students are unable to take study time due to demands of their placement this should be raised with the provider by the placement tutor to ensure this can be taken.

Ten Day Allowance

Within each placement there is a ten day allowance which includes statutory bank holidays. The ten days is for emergencies, illness and unexpected personal circumstances that need to be covered, reducing the risk of a placement needing to be extended. It should be noted that it is not always possible to extend placements in provider agencies or the practice educator may have other commitments. If a student does not complete the full number of assessed days required, then this is classed as an incomplete placement.

Practice Breakdown/Failing Students and Concerns Procedures

Students and practice educators should be encouraged to alert the student's tutor and agency placement lead to any difficulties that arise during the placement at an early stage. It is essential that concerns are responded to in a timely way as this can prevent a placement breakdown and where a student is marginal or failing allows an action plan to be developed to address areas of concern. A follow-up meeting will be required to review progress against areas identified in the action plan.

Placement arrangements usually breakdown for one of the following reasons:

- Inadequate practice learning opportunities to meet the assessment requirements.
- Concerns about the student's inability to demonstrate competence are such that agreement is reached that the placement will not continue.
- Student unable to complete the placement due to ill health or personal circumstances.

In the first instance, students and practice educators should be encouraged to resolve issues within supervision. If this is unsuccessful it is the responsibility of the tutor to convene and chair a concerns meeting. The concerns meeting pro forma needs to be completed and in the case of a Placement Termination the Record of Placement Termination/Breakdown needs to be completed and copies sent to the placement admin team, the practice learning manager and the senior lecture practice education.

The outcome of the meeting will be one of the following:

- Maintain current arrangements.
- Alter the practice arrangements and form an action plan, which is reviewed.
- Terminate the practice learning.

Prior to a Concerns Meeting being held the tutor should discuss the circumstances and procedures with the Senior Lecturer responsible for practice learning

In the event of a student failing a placement or the placement being terminated a full practice educator's report is required.

Support for Disabled Students

Tutors should discuss with any student that has a disability the possible need for reasonable adjustments to be requested in the placement setting. It is up to each individual student to decide whether to disclose their disability and request any reasonable adjustments that they and their tutor consider necessary. Either way, a consent form should be completed and if applicable a reasonable adjustments request form should also be completed and submitted with the Practice Learning Application form.

Practice Education Policies and Procedures

Policies, procedures, and all documentation relating to practice education at Sheffield Hallam University can be found on the Health and Social Care Placement Learning Information website:

<https://www.shu.ac.uk/health-social-placements>