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Care Council for Wales

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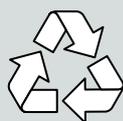
The Social Work Degree in Wales Practice Assessment Guidance



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Introduction

The Care Council for Wales (Care Council) document *The Framework for the Degree in Social Work (2012)*¹ outlines the Welsh Government requirements for the award of the degree in social work.

It includes the Care Council rules for the approval and quality assurance of social work degree programmes and provides an assessment framework that sets out the standards for, and an approach to, the assessment of student evidence. Student learning on the degree is based on a range of standards, namely:

- The National Occupational Standards for Social Work (NOS)
- The Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statements for Social Work
- The *Code of Practice for Social Care Workers* (Code of Practice)

The following guidance has been developed jointly by the Care Council and the social work degree programmes across Wales. It describes the focus and process of student assessment in their Practice Learning Opportunities, and how the standards need to be evidenced.

The social work degree requires students to complete an integrated course comprising equal amounts of academic and practice learning so “*Practice learning enables students to develop their values, skills and knowledge incrementally and progressively, with appropriate and fair assessment methods that assess progress and achievement*”². Each set of standards emphasises the importance of integration. The NOS require knowledge and academic skills such as critical reflection to be part of competent practice, the QAA emphasises the importance of practice competence and integrated learning and the *Code of Practice* requires social workers to “*take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills*”³. In order to deliver the integrated learning outlined above, a range of different professionals are involved in student assessment, however this guidance is designed specifically for social work students and those with responsibilities for their practice assessment.

¹ The Framework for The Degree in Social Work, 2012, Care Council for Wales. www.ccwales.org.uk

² Ensuring Consistency in Learning to Practice, SSIW, 2004 page 39

³ Code of Practice for Social Care Workers, Care Council for Wales, <http://www.ccwales.org.uk>

Purpose of the Guidance

The purpose of the Assessment Framework for the Social Work Degree (Assessment Framework) is to ensure all social work students successfully completing the social work degree in Wales have demonstrated they meet the minimum requirements of competence as described in the Welsh Government *Requirements for an Award of a Degree in Social Work*. The Assessment Framework therefore provides a structure for standardising the learning outcomes at three levels of the social work degree, upon which programmes will have based their curriculum.

This guidance is designed to support the assessment of students on the degree and provides a structure upon which practice assessors can use their own knowledge and skills to make judgements on developing competence.

Assessment and Levels

The student's practice is assessed for each of the three levels of the degree. The assessment of practice learning must be undertaken by a registered and experienced social worker who is, or is training to be, a qualified assessor.

Evidence of learning and all accompanying material including the practice assessor report should be presented in a portfolio. In compiling the portfolio students and practice assessors must pay due regard to service user and carer confidentiality. In addition they must ensure that all written work is produced to a professional standard. The portfolio must be satisfactorily presented in terms of spelling, grammar and clarity of written communication and students are strongly encouraged to keep as much evidence as possible in an electronic format.

By the end of the programme students will need to be able to meet the standards described in the NOS for social work.

The social work degree is an integrated academic and professional award leading to professional regulation. As such all forms of teaching, learning and assessment, whether college or agency based, must integrate theory and practice. In order to pass the degree, students must:

- successfully complete each level of learning before proceeding to the next;
- pass at least 200 days of assessed practice learning;
- provide evidence of competence against the six Key Roles of Social Work as defined by the twenty NOS for Social Work 2011;

- demonstrate a growing understanding, analysis and application of the Care Council's *Code of Practice*;
- pass all assessed components of academic work;
- demonstrate they are able to use ICT methods and techniques to support their learning and practice as defined by the relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Social Work.

a. The National Occupational Standards for Social Work

The National Occupational Standards describe:

- Six key roles of professional social work,
- Twenty functions of a competent social worker
- A range of performance indicators that describe the features of competence in the twenty functions.

Functional Map and Key Roles for Social Work National Occupational Standards 2012

Key role 1	Maintain professional accountability
NOS Standard 1	Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice
NOS Standard 2	Develop social work practice through supervision and reflection
Key role 2	Practise professional social work
NOS Standard 3	Manage your role as a professional social worker
NOS Standard 4	Exercise professional judgement in social work
NOS Standard 5	Manage ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts
NOS Standard 6	Practise social work in multi-disciplinary contexts
NOS Standard 7	Prepare professional reports and records relating to people
Key role 3	Promote engagement and participation
NOS Standard 8	Prepare for social work involvement
NOS Standard 9	Engage people in social work practice
NOS Standard 10	Support people to participate in decision-making processes
NOS Standard 11	Advocate on behalf of people
Key role 4	Assess needs, risks and circumstances
NOS Standard 12	Assess needs, risks and circumstances in partnership with those involved
NOS Standard 13	Investigate harm or abuse
Key role 5	Plan for person centred outcomes
NOS Standard 14	Plan in partnership to address short and longer term issues
NOS Standard 15	Agree risk management plans to promote independence and responsibility
NOS Standard 16	Agree plans where there is risk of harm or abuse
Key role 6	Take actions to achieve change
NOS Standard 17	Apply methods and models of social work intervention to promote change
NOS Standard 18	Access resources to support person centred solutions
NOS Standard 19	Evaluate outcomes of social work practice
NOS Standard 20	Disengage at the end of social work involvement

For a student to complete a degree programme they must be able to meet the required NOS.

Students will need to demonstrate their development over the course of the social work degree towards the six key roles and the twenty NOS.

Practice Assessor Guidance

The guidance describes the three levels of the degree. In each level there is a description of:

- The focus of learning,
- What students have to demonstrate,
- The criteria upon which assessment judgements will be made,
- Any specific requirements relating to assessment or the gathering of evidence
- A pro forma the student could use to indicate their evidence against each of the NOS and the *Code of Practice*.

Each social work degree programme will develop its approach to assessment which will include portfolio requirements. This information will be contained in programme or practice learning handbooks. It is for students to gather, collate and present evidence and for assessors to make judgements on the adequacy of the evidence presented.

At the end of a Practice Learning Opportunity (PLO) the assessor will prepare a final report in which they will summarise the student's capacity to meet the key role and underpinning NOS. Two examples are given below in relation to one key role.

The Practice Assessor's comments on the student's performance under each key role should use illustrative examples relating to the standard to support their comments and should signpost where in the portfolio the evidence can be found. Confirmation that the student can meet the requirements of each standard is required. (The performance indicators should inform the types of activities that will provide evidence for the NOS - see appendix 3).

Example of Assessor's Summary

Key Role 3 – Promote Engagement and Participation

NOS 8: Prepare for social work involvement

NOS 9: Engage people in social work practice

NOS 10: Support people to participate in decision making processes

NOS 11: Advocate on behalf of others

EXAMPLE 1

Jane has demonstrated a great deal of skill in promoting and engaging service users. The direct observation (DO) material, particularly the preparation for DO 3 and DO 4 are examples of her thoroughness. Her engagement with service users is particularly evidenced in DO 3 where the service user felt able to confide in Jane and talk for the first time about her anxieties. Jane has an encouraging and approachable manner that has enabled service users to feel supported in their decision making – an area discussed in supervision (see notes relating to meeting 6). Her reflective account for DO 2 and the feedback from the service user are excellent examples of how she advocates on behalf of others.

Jane has evidenced her competence in this Key Role and the standards that underpin it.

EXAMPLE 2

Throughout the PLO Jane made use of opportunities to prepare for intervention with the service users. Preparation 1 demonstrates how she contacted other agencies to gain relevant information prior to the observation taking place. In supervision notes 3 Jane demonstrated her understanding of legal requirements in relation to service user A and considered how the intervention had impacted on the service user's quality of life (NOS 8).

In DO 3 Jane chaired a multi agency meeting. Throughout this meeting she demonstrated an ability to communicate effectively with all participants. Jane ensured that the service user had the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding the assessment and proposed plan. This is evidenced by service user feedback 3 which states that they felt fully involved in the meeting and in the decision making process that followed (NOS 9,10). Supporting evidence for NOS 11 can be seen in witness testimony 1. I am confident that Jane is competent in this key role at this level and can meet the requirements of each of the specified NOS.

Level at which student is performing: (please indicate appropriate rating)

Poor

Satisfactory

Good

a. The Focus of Learning

At Level 1 Students must:

- demonstrate fitness to proceed in social work practice,
- describe, illustrate and apply the *Code of Practice*.

At level 2 Students must demonstrate:

- the application of knowledge, skills and values in social work practice,
- analysis and an evaluation of their application of the *Code of Practice*.

At level 3 students must demonstrate:

- development and confirmation of competence in social work practice,
- they fully integrate and critically analyse their application of the *Code of Practice*.

b. What Students have to demonstrate

Students at level 1 are required to produce evidence against specific criteria (see page 10). However at level two and three evidence is required against each of the twenty NOS.

It is not the intention that each performance indicator has to be demonstrated or evidenced, but the practice assessor will need to apply their professional judgement to ensure the evidence presented by the student is of a quality to determine the appropriate level of competence has been reached and can be sustained. Any contra-indication of evidence of competence against an NOS may suggest a student had not reached the required level of competence.

Students must show evidence of the integration of skills and knowledge with relevant conceptual understanding, including evidence of applying an understanding of the legislation, cultures, languages, geography and institutions of Wales in their practice.

The contents of a final portfolio at level two and three will vary according to the level of study and the individual programme requirements and details will be found in programme handbooks. However they will include the following:

- A Practice Learning Agreement including contact details of all parties, agency hours and expectations of the student;
- Profiles of student, (including any reasonable adjustment required to the programme and identified learning needs) and the agency;
- Profile of the agency and service it provides;
- Verification of Disclosure and Barring checks;
- A supervision agreement and evidence of supervision meetings including agendas and signed supervision notes from at least five meetings;
- Direct Observation documents including preparations for observation, student reflection, practice assessor and service users' and carers' feedback;
- Midway report on student progress;
- Final Practice Assessor report with pass/fail recommendation,
- NOS and *Code of Practice* evidence grid
- Other documentary evidence as appropriate.

Level 1 – Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice

At this level students will be assessed on whether they are suitable for further social work education and training on the basis of observation of his or her practice and all other assessed work. Students are therefore required to provide evidence of competence against specific aspects of a social worker's key roles as drawn from the NOS.

1. Students will need to demonstrate they have:
 - 1.1. the interpersonal skills and values required in order for him or her to be suitable and safe to work with service users and carers;
 - 1.2. acquired an understanding, directly from service users and carers, of the impact of social work practice upon them and⁴;
 - 1.3. described, illustrated and applied the *Code of Practice* through their practice, conduct and academic work⁵.
2. In reaching this judgement assessors will need students to demonstrate they meet the following standards:
 - Key role 1, standard 2, Performance Indicator (PI) 1:
Seek professional supervision to develop accountable social work practice
 - Key role 1, standard 2, PI 2:
Prepare for formal professional supervision in ways that maximise its effectiveness
 - Key role 2, standard 5, PI 1:
Recognise ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts that arise in the course of social work practice
 - Key role 3 standard 9, PI 1:
Plan how to use communication to secure initial engagement
 - Key role 3 standard 9, PI 2:
Use communication skills to establish the social work relationship

⁴ Paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 are taken directly from the Welsh Government requirements for the Social Work Degree published in The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales, Care Council for Wales 2012.

⁵ Paragraph 1.3 is taken from the Assessment Framework for the Social Work Degree published in The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales, Care Council for Wales 2012.

Level 1 – Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice

At this level students will be assessed on whether they are suitable for further social work education and training. Evidence is required of:

- students meeting the criteria set out below and,
- describing, illustrating and applying the *Code of Practice*.

Key Role 1: Maintain Professional Accountability

NOS Standard 2: Develop social work practice through supervision and reflection

Performance Indicators	Source and location of evidence
	e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User Feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1),
Seek professional supervision to develop accountable social work practice	
Prepare for formal professional supervision in ways that maximise its effectiveness	

Key Role 2: Practise Professional Social Work

NOS Standard 5: Manage ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts

Performance Indicators	Source and location of evidence
	e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User Feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1),
Recognise ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts that arise in the course of social work practice	

Key Role 3: Promote Engagement and participation

NOS Standard 9 Engage people in social work practice

Performance Indicators	Source and location of evidence
	e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1),
Plan how to use communication to secure initial engagement	
Use communication skills to establish the social work relationship	

Level 1 – Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice Code of Practice

Code of Practice	Evidence of describing, illustrating and applying the <i>Code of Practice</i>
<p>Standard 1 As a social care worker, you must protect the rights and promote the interests of service users and carers.</p>	
<p>Standard 2 As a social care worker, you must strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers.</p>	
<p>Standard 3 As a social care worker, you must promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.</p>	
<p>Standard 4 As a social care worker, you must respect the rights of service users whilst seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.</p>	
<p>Standard 5 As a social care worker, you must uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.</p>	
<p>Standard 6 As a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.</p>	

Level 2 – Applying Knowledge Skills and Values in Social Work Practice

At this level students should be applying social work knowledge, skills and values including research findings in their practice and will need to demonstrate the development of critical, analytical and reflective practice.

In reaching a judgement about the student's competence at this level they will be assessed on the basis of:

- Evidence required for each of the twenty NOS at this level. Practice assessors will need to be alert to any contra evidence for each standard;
- Evidence of analysis and evaluation of their application of the *Code of Practice* through their practice, conduct and academic work.

The performance indicators ascribed to level two are illustrative examples of competence that can inform the assessment.

There will be a minimum of four Direct Observations of the student's practice with users of social care services. At least three must be undertaken by the practice assessor, the other may be undertaken by a different registered social worker.

Service user feedback should be sought for all Direct Observations with a minimum of three pieces of feedback required.

Level 2 – Applying Knowledge, Skills and Values in Social Work Practice

The table below provides an example of how the evidence can be mapped in an evidence summary chart and can be replicated for each key role.

- Provide evidence for **each of the NOS for each Key Role**
- The Performance Indicators (see appendix 3) illustrate the type of evidence required
- Evidence is also required of the student's analysis and evaluation of their application of the six standards of the *Code of Practice*

Key Role 1: Maintain Professional Accountability

NOS Standard 1:

Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice

Example	Source and location of evidence
	e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1), Direct Observation (DO 1)

NOS Standard 2:

Develop social work practice through supervision and reflection

Example	Source and location of evidence
	e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1), Direct Observation (DO 1)

Level 2 – Applying Knowledge, Skills and Values in Social Work Practice

Code of Practice	Evidence of analysis and evaluation of the application of the Code of Practice
<p>Standard 1 As a social care worker, you must protect the rights and promote the interests of service users and carers.</p>	
<p>Standard 2 As a social care worker, you must strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers.</p>	
<p>Standard 3 As a social care worker, you must promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.</p>	
<p>Standard 4 As a social care worker, you must respect the rights of service users whilst seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.</p>	
<p>Standard 5 As a social care worker, you must uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.</p>	
<p>Standard 6 As a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.</p>	

Level 3 – Development and Confirmation of Competence in Social Work Practice

Level 3 – Development and Confirmation of Competence in Social Work Practice

Building on the knowledge, skills and values attained at level two, at this level students should be demonstrating professional judgement, intervention and critical reflection across their practice.

In reaching a judgement about the student's competence at this level they will be assessed on the basis of:

- Evidence required for each of the twenty NOS at this level. Practice assessors will need to be alert to any contra evidence for each standard;
- Evidence of full integration and critical analysis of their application of the *Code of Practice* through their practice, conduct and academic work.

The performance indicators ascribed to level three are illustrative examples of competence that can inform the assessment.

There will be a minimum of five Direct Observations of the student's practice with users of social care services. At least four must be undertaken by the practice assessor, the other may be undertaken by a different registered social worker.

Service user feedback should be sought for all Direct Observations with a minimum of three pieces of feedback required.

Level 3 – Developing and Confirming competence in Social Work Practice

Report Format for Evidencing Practice Learning

The table below provides an example of how the evidence can be mapped in an evidence summary chart and can be replicated for each key role.

- Provide evidence for **each of the NOS for each Key Role**
- The Performance Indicators (see appendix 3) illustrate the type of evidence required
- Evidence is also required of the student's full integration and critical analysis of their application of the *Code of Practice*

Key Role 1: Maintain Professional Accountability

NOS Standard 1:

Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice

Example

Source and location of evidence

e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1), Direct Observation (DO 1)

NOS Standard 2:

Develop social work practice through supervision and reflection

Example

Source and location of evidence

e.g. Reflective Account (RA), Service User feedback (SUF), Supervision Notes (SN1), Direct Observation (DO 1)

Level 3 – Developing and Confirming competence in Social Work Practice

Code of Practice	Evidence of full integration and critical analysis of their application of the <i>Code of Practice</i>
<p>Standard 1 As a social care worker, you must protect the rights and promote the interests of service users and carers.</p>	
<p>Standard 2 As a social care worker, you must strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers.</p>	
<p>Standard 3 As a social care worker, you must promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.</p>	
<p>Standard 4 As a social care worker, you must respect the rights of service users whilst seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.</p>	
<p>Standard 5 As a social care worker, you must uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.</p>	
<p>Standard 6 As a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.</p>	

Appendix 1 – Evidence of Meeting the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers in the Social Work Degree

At Level 1 of the social work degree students must **describe, illustrate and apply** the *Code of Practice* through their practice, conduct and academic work.

At Level 2 of the social work degree students must demonstrate evidence of **analysis and evaluation of their application of the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers** through their practice, conduct and academic work.

At Level 3 of the social work degree students must demonstrate evidence of **fully integrating and critically analysing their application of the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers** through their practice, conduct and academic work.

Examples of evidence from practice should be provided against each standard at all levels.

Standard 1

As a social care worker, you must protect the rights and promote the interests of service users and carers.

This includes:

- 1.1 treating each person as an individual;
- 1.2 respecting and, where appropriate, promoting the individual views and wishes of both service users and carers;
- 1.3 supporting service users' rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive;
- 1.4 respecting and maintaining the dignity and privacy of service users;
- 1.5 promoting equal opportunities for service users and carers; and
- 1.6 respecting diversity and different cultures and values.

Standard 2

As a social care worker, you must strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers

This includes:

- 2.1 being honest and trustworthy;
- 2.2 communicating in an appropriate, open, accurate and straightforward way;
- 2.3 respecting confidential information and clearly explaining agency policies about confidentiality to services users and carers;
- 2.4 being reliable and dependable;
- 2.5 honouring work commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explaining why to service users and carers;

- 2.6 declaring issues that might create conflicts of interest and making sure that they do not influence your judgement or practice; and
- 2.7 adhering to policies and procedures about accepting gifts and money from service users and carers.

Standard 3

As a social care worker, you must promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.

This includes:

- 3.1 promoting the independence of service users and assisting them to understand and exercise their rights;
- 3.2 using established processes and procedures to challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice;
- 3.3 following practice and procedures designed to keep you and other people safe from violent and abusive behaviour at work;
- 3.4 bringing to the attention of your employer or the appropriate authority resource or operational difficulties that might get in the way of the delivery of safe care;
- 3.5 informing your employer or an appropriate authority where the practice of colleagues may be unsafe or adversely affecting standards of care;
- 3.6 complying with employers' health and safety policies including those relating to substance abuse;

- 3.7 helping service users and carers to make complaints, taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person; and
- 3.8 recognising and using responsibly the power that comes from your work with service users and carers.

Standard 4

As a social care worker, you must respect the rights of service users whilst seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.

This includes:

- 4.1 recognising that service users have the right to take risks and helping them to identify and manage potential and actual risks to themselves and others;
- 4.2 following risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of service users presents a risk of harm to themselves or others;
- 4.3 taking necessary steps to minimise the risks of service users from doing actual or potential harm to themselves or other people; and
- 4.4 ensuring that relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments.

Standard 5

As a social care worker, you must uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.

In particular you must not:

- 5.1 abuse, neglect or harm service users, carers or colleagues;

- 5.2 exploit service users, carers or colleagues in any way;
- 5.3 abuse the trust of service users and carers or the access you have to personal information about them, or to their property, home or workplace;
- 5.4 form inappropriate personal relationships with service users;
- 5.5 discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against service users, carers or colleagues;
- 5.6 condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by service users, carers or colleagues;
- 5.7 put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk; or
- 5.8 behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question your suitability to work in social care services.
- 6.4 seeking assistance from your employer or the appropriate authority if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work or you are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter;
- 6.5 working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treating them with respect;
- 6.6 recognising that you remain responsible for the work that you have delegated to other workers;
- 6.7 recognising and respecting the roles and expertise of workers from other agencies and working in partnership with them;
- 6.8 undertaking relevant training to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills and contributing to the learning and development of others.

Standard 6

As a social care worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.

This includes:

- 6.1 meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful, safe and effective way;
- 6.2 maintaining clear and accurate records as required by procedures established for your work;
- 6.3 informing your employer or the appropriate authority about any personal difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely;

Appendix 2 – National Occupational Standards Social Work 2012: Key Roles and Overview of Standards

The full standards are available on the Care Council for Wales' website www.ccwales.org.uk

Functional Map/Key Roles for Social Work NOS

Key role 1 Maintain professional accountability		
NOS 1	Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. In order to practise safely and professionally, social workers must continually equip themselves with a body of knowledge and evidence that draws on academic literature, research, local understanding and national legislation relating to the sphere of activity. The standard establishes a planned approach to on-going study and research that will help to secure evidence-based and legally sound social work practice.
NOS 2	Develop social work practice through supervision and reflection	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. The twin strands of professional supervision and personal reflection are essential to the development of practice and social workers must make effective use of both. These in turn need to be informed by feedback from others, and supplemented with less formal support when this is helpful or necessary. The standard addresses these areas and ensures that new learning is integrated within practice, so as to improve individual practice and contribute to developing the profession as a whole.

Key role 2 Practise professional social work

NOS 3	Manage your role as a professional social worker	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Social work makes demands not only on social workers' professional knowledge and skill, but also on their personal capacities. The work can affect their personal well-being, both physical and emotional. The standards addresses the need for conscious planning of how best to use time, energy and expertise, how best to stay safe in situations where there is risk, and how to manage the social work role within its various contexts and constraints
NOS 4	Exercise professional judgement in social work	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. At the heart of social work practice is the need to make judgements that will impact on the lives of others, sometimes in challenging circumstances or with extreme effects. Independent judgements must be made even when working in person centred ways and in close partnership with others. The standard expresses how social workers must bring to the decision-making process a rigorous and thoughtful analysis of information and its implications, leading to judgements that can be asserted with confidence to ensure that the best interests of those involved are being served.
NOS 5	Manage ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. The complex situations encountered by social workers often present issues, dilemmas and conflicts that have a strong ethical dimension. These may arise from tensions between rights and responsibilities, between risk and protection, between assessed need and available resources. The standard addresses the cycle of research, reflection, action and learning in the context of ethical decision-making.

NOS 6	Practise social work in multi-disciplinary contexts	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Effective multi-disciplinary work is an essential component of social work: the information known to different agencies must be shared to identify those at risk, the skills of different professions must be co-ordinated to benefit those with complex requirements, the resources of different agencies must be pooled to maximise person centred outcomes. The standard addresses the components of multi-disciplinary working while maintaining the distinctive role and contribution of the social worker.
NOS 7	Prepare professional reports and records relating to people	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities, and others whose work involves the preparation of professional reports and records in similar contexts. Reports that will be used when making decisions about people's lives must be accurate, honest, cogently presented and responsibly disseminated. Information technology offers new and effective ways of presenting and sharing information. The standard addresses practices for high quality report-writing, record-keeping and information-sharing in the context of legal, organisational and ethical requirements.
Key role 3 Promote engagement and participation		
NOS 8	Prepare for social work involvement	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Inadequate preparation prior to initial social work contact can be disrespectful, a source of frustration and potentially dangerous. The need to be fully prepared must be balanced with an open-mindedness that avoids assumptions and recognises the expertise people have about their own situations, which may or may not have been captured in existing information. The standard addresses how best to gather diverse information (even if incomplete) and use it to plan the best beginning for social work involvement.

NOS 9	Engage people in social work practice	<p>This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. To engage people in exploring and addressing their own circumstances is a vital part of social work practice that weaves through all other aspects of the role. It requires social workers to use their own skills and qualities as resources to build and sustain engagement, sometimes when encountering reluctance or resistance. The standard addresses the central place of communication and creativity in this context, and recognises the potential of people to use their own resourcefulness to achieve change.</p>
NOS 10	Support people to participate in decision-making processes	<p>This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities, and others who work in similar contexts. Decision-making processes relating to social work or similar contexts are often complex and may be daunting for those caught up in them. Supporting people to participate is of fundamental importance and may take many forms if it is to enable people to be heard rather than spoken for unnecessarily. The standard addresses the process of supporting participation, from assessing people's capacity to speak for themselves to confirming their understanding of the outcomes of their participation. It recognises that support for participation must include challenging barriers and discrimination as well as building people's own capacity to advocate for themselves.</p>
NOS 11	Advocate on behalf of people	<p>This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities, and others working in similar contexts. In a particular situation or over a longer period of time, it may be necessary to represent people's views, needs or wishes when they are not in a position to do so for themselves. The standard addresses what is involved in advocating on behalf of others, including the need to consider conflicts of interest, to maximise participation by working closely together throughout, and to ensure that the outcomes of advocacy are fully understood.</p>

Key role 4 Assess needs, risks and circumstances

NOS 12	Assess needs, risks and circumstances in partnership with those involved	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Assessment is a distinctive professional activity within social work. Accurate, comprehensive and person centred assessment helps to ensure that consequent social work involvement will truly fit people's lives and circumstances, and planning cannot begin until assessment is complete. Assessment of risk is an important feature of the process (though not the only one) and tensions may arise between rights and responsibilities in relation to this. The standard recognises that people are experts about their own lives and that information held by others, including those in other agencies or disciplines, also has a crucial role to play in building a holistic assessment.
NOS 13	Investigate harm or abuse	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Investigating harm or abuse is a complex and demanding activity which has at its heart the safeguarding of a vulnerable adult, young person or child. It involves working closely with other disciplines and agencies; exercising professional assertiveness in situations where there may be overt or covert hostility; making difficult judgements; and developing options for action which may have far-reaching consequences. All this must be done in the context of legal, organisational and other binding requirements. The standard covers these aspects and highlights the need to maintain a focus on the person who is at risk, whatever others needs or issues may come to light during the investigation process.

Key role 5 Plan for person centred outcomes

NOS 14	Plan in partnership to address short and longer term issues	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Planning within social work is about seeking creative ways to achieve outcomes, not about matching people to traditional or existing services. Solutions may be found within people themselves or their personal networks; through combining services in new or more established ways; or by specifying what tailor made support might look like. The standard addresses the cycle of working together to identify outcomes and objectives, explore possible solutions and check their feasibility, and agree a plan that builds in ways to test how well the solution is working.
NOS 15	Agree risk management plans to promote independence and responsibility	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. The association between risk, independence and personal responsibility makes risk management within social work a dynamic undertaking. It includes balancing different rights and responsibilities, and exploring ways to enable risks to be taken where these have the potential to enhance people's lives. The standard addresses these areas while recognising that specific safe-guards may nonetheless be necessary. It sets risk management planning in the context of collaborative work and highlights the importance of shared agreement and on-going monitoring of risk-related plans.
NOS 16	Agree plans where there is risk of harm or abuse	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Where risk of harm or abuse has been investigated and confirmed, plans to address the risk must be agreed as a matter of urgency within a multi-agency framework. While the initial focus must be on securing short-term safety, therapeutic objectives must also be addressed. These will include identifying the least damaging plan of action for the short term and planning for restorative approaches, where possible, in the longer term. The standard covers these areas in the context of collaborative multi-disciplinary working.

Key role 6 Take actions to achieve change

NOS 17	Apply methods and models of social work intervention to promote change	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Sound knowledge of a range of evidence-based interventions, coupled with a social worker's use of self in applying them, stand as key resources in social work practice. The focus of the intervention may be a group, an individual or a system within which an individual functions. The standard recognises that different interventions will need to be selected for different situations, and the choice explained when necessary. The standard also stresses the need for careful reflection on the effectiveness of any intervention used, with an openness to learn and adapt practice to help achieve change as the intervention proceeds.
NOS 18	Access resources to support person centred solutions	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. The role of social workers in accessing resources is often beset with constraints of eligibility, funding, availability and suitability. Creative problem-solving and innovative thinking are crucial skills, not only to maximise scarce resources but also to ensure that services and other resources truly suit the people for whom they have been secured and enable outcomes to be achieved. The standard reflects these considerations and acknowledges the different roles that social workers may need to take when accessing resources.
NOS 19	Evaluate outcomes of social work practice	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Evaluation can easily be overlooked when new demands are constantly being presented, but it is an essential step in continually improving social work practice and people's experience of it. The primary focus of evaluation must be on people themselves and how well they have benefitted from interventions, risk management and resources. The standard addresses the process of evaluation including both personal reflection and objective review using different perspectives and measures, including organisational aspects. It recognises that lessons learned must inform future practice and can influence the wider profession also.

NOS 20	Disengage at the end of social work involvement	This standard is for social workers working with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities. Social work engagement with particular people may end because of changes in their circumstances or because of a change of social worker. Sensitive disengagement demonstrates respect for the people involved while clarity of information provides reassurance. The standard reflects these concerns along with the practical processes of disengagement.
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Appendix 3 – Performance Indicators for Levels One, Two and Three of the Social Work Degree⁶

Key role 1: Maintain professional accountability		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
NOS 1: Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice				
P1	Establish your own strategy for maintaining an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice		*	*
P2	Research statutory, legal and procedural requirements and academic literature relating to social work practice		*	*
P3	Analyse the statutory and non-statutory powers exercised by social workers and organisations		*	*
P4	Review the outcomes of previous social work practice for individuals, families, groups and communities locally			*
P5	Review your own knowledge about issues of equality, fairness, access and anti-discriminatory practice and provision			*
P6	Synthesise information to understand how evidence-based practice applies in your own role			*
P7	Plan, with support, how to integrate current and emerging research into your own practice		*	*
NOS 2: Develop social work practice through supervision and reflection				
P1	Seek professional supervision to develop accountable social work practice	*	*	*
P2	Prepare for formal professional supervision in ways that will maximise its effectiveness	*	*	*
P3	Access additional sources of support compatible with professional social work principles		*	*

⁶ At Level 1 evidence against all the performance indicators marked with * must be presented. At level 2 and 3 indicators marked with * are illustrative examples of competence that can inform the assessment. See pages 7, 10, 13 and 16 for more information.

P4	Use feedback from supervision and other sources to inform reflection on and evaluation of your social work practice		*	*
P5	Reflect on the cultural context in which you practice and how this impacts upon your work		*	*
P6	Reflect on your own values, beliefs and assumptions and how they impact on your social work practice		*	*
P7	Integrate learning within practice		*	*
P8	Contribute your own knowledge of best practice to the continuing development of the profession			*

Key Role 2: Practise Professional Social Work	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
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NOS 3: Manage your role as a professional social worker				
P1	Work within the context of your own organisation		*	*
P2	Establish the parameters of your own work role and how the responsibilities of others link with these		*	*
P3	Ensure your understanding of processes in which you may be involved		*	*
P4	Plan, with support, how to prioritise work in order to use your time effectively		*	*
P5	Take steps to ensure your safety in situations where there is risk of harm to you		*	*
P6	Recognise the effect that work situations may have on your well-being and your practice		*	*
P7	Implement strategies to develop your personal and professional resilience			*
P8	Challenge your own assumptions that could lead to discrimination in your practice			*
P9	Reflect on the way you manage your role, to ensure continual development and continued professional registration			*

NOS 4: Exercise professional judgement in social work				
P1	Analyse a range of information that will inform professional decisions about specific complex situations		*	*

P2	Develop a range of options for addressing the situation		*	*
P3	Evaluate the implications of different options for the people involved		*	*
P4	Exercise professional judgement to make evidence-based decisions		*	*
P5	Present both verbally and in writing the rationale for your professional judgements			*
P6	Justify your professional judgements where others disagree or challenge them			*
P7	Challenge judgements of others that appear to conflict with the evidence or to work against people's best interests			*
P8	Consider the need to modify your own judgement where new evidence is presented		*	*

NOS 5: Manage ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts

P1	Recognise ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts that arise in the course of social work practice	*	*	*
P2	Review sources of information and knowledge that can inform professional judgements about ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts		*	*
P3	Reflect on how your own values and experiences may impact on managing ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts		*	*
P4	Make professional judgements taking account of ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts			*
P5	Support others to understand how ethical considerations may have affected decisions made			*
P6	Evaluate outcomes of how you have managed ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts to inform your future practice			*

NOS 6: Practise social work in multi-disciplinary contexts

P1	Develop collaborative working relationships with professionals from other disciplines		*	*
P2	Uphold the role and function of social work when working in a multi-disciplinary context		*	*
P3	Develop your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of others involved in multi-disciplinary work		*	*

P4	Ensure that social work principles, <i>codes of practice</i> and values are applied when working with others		*	*
P5	Contribute to identifying and agreeing the goals and objectives of the multi-disciplinary work		*	*
P6	Negotiate responsibilities that respect legal, ethical, organisational and professional boundaries in a multi-disciplinary context			*
P7	Negotiate agreements on systems for the exchange of information which contribute to the safeguarding and wellbeing of individuals and the wider community			*
P8	Apply social work knowledge and skills to deal constructively with disagreements and conflict within multi-disciplinary relationships			*
P9	Contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of the multi-disciplinary work		*	*

NOS 7: Prepare professional reports and records relating to people

P1	Use language appropriate to the intended audience to construct professional reports that are analytical and coherent			*
P2	Maintain accurate, complete, retrievable, and up-to-date records		*	*
P3	Ensure reports and records can be understood by those who have a right to see them		*	*
P4	Make use of information communication technology that supports information exchange within and across disciplines and organisations		*	*
P5	Ensure that records and reports comply with legal and organisational requirements, balancing the tension between safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection		*	*

Key Role 3: Promote engagement and participation

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

NOS 8: Prepare for social work involvement

P1	Clarify details of the referral and any associated risks		*	*
P2	Engage appropriately with others to access additional information		*	*

P3	Investigate legal requirements and organisational procedures with a bearing on the proposed involvement		*	*
P4	Research further information that may inform your initial involvement		*	*
P5	Reflect on aspects of self that may have an impact on the social work relationship		*	*
P6	Synthesise all information gathered		*	*
P7	Make a professional judgement with support from others about the best form of initial involvement		*	*

NOS 9: Engage people in social work practice

P1	Plan how to use communication to secure initial engagement	*	*	*
P2	Use communication skills to establish the social work relationship	*	*	*
P3	Support people to find effective ways to communicate their views, needs and preferences		*	*
P4	Develop understanding in others of your own and the organisation's duties and responsibilities		*	*
P5	Support people to explore their own circumstances, their existing networks and other resources available to them		*	*
P6	Engage people to participate in finding creative ways to achieve change		*	*
P7	Work with others to address any hostility or resistance encountered			*
P8	Appraise the impact of self in sustaining engagement and partnership working			*
P9	Seek feedback from people on how effective your engagement with them has been		*	*
P10	Adjust the way you develop and sustain engagement in the light of reflection and feedback		*	*

NOS 10: Support people to participate in decision-making processes

P1	Assess people's capacity to navigate systems and make their voices heard		*	*
P2	Agree the level and nature of your own contribution in supporting people to participate in decision-making processes		*	*

P3	Ensure literature and documentation is made available to people in their preferred language and format		*	*
P4	Support people to understand the concepts of power and empowerment in different situations		*	*
P5	Explain processes and procedures to enable people to participate as fully as possible		*	*
P6	Work with people to build their capacity to advocate for themselves		*	*
P7	Carry out your agreed role to support participation in decision-making processes		*	*
P8	Confirm people's understanding of the outcomes of their participation and any decisions made		*	*
P9	Identify any prejudice and discrimination encountered		*	*
P10	Promote social justice by challenging systems or processes that present barriers to people's participation		*	*
P11	Review the effectiveness of support provided		*	*
NOS 11: Advocate on behalf of people				
P1	Establish if people require you to advocate for them in specific situations		*	*
P2	Clarify with people the desired outcomes of the advocacy and other possible outcomes		*	*
P3	Support people to participate to the extent that they are able		*	*
P4	Make professional judgements about any potential conflicts of interest that may arise if you act as advocate		*	*
P5	Collaborate with people to prepare a case that represents their best interests		*	*
P6	Make representation to achieve desired outcomes		*	*
P7	Communicate outcomes of the advocacy in ways that can be understood		*	*
P8	Review the effectiveness of advocacy		*	*

Key Role 4: Assess needs, risks and circumstances		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
NOS 12: Assess needs, risks and circumstances in partnership with those involved				
P1	Listen to people's own accounts of their situation		*	*
P2	Work holistically with people to enable them to identify, clarify and express their strengths, needs and expectations		*	*
P3	Identify obstacles that create limitations for people		*	*
P4	Assist people to identify what would help them build on their own strengths, abilities and achievements		*	*
P5	Work with others to gather further information relevant to the assessment		*	*
P6	Work with people to identify any risks associated with their situation			*
P7	Analyse the nature, level, urgency and implications of any risks identified, in compliance with legal and other requirements			*
P8	Assess the balance of people's rights and responsibilities in relation to any risks identified			*
P9	Make professional judgements about needs, risks and protective factors to inform planning			*
P10	Record assessment information accurately and in accordance with organisational requirements		*	*
NOS 13: Investigate harm or abuse				
P1	Identify behaviours and environments that present potential risk of harm or abuse		*	*
P2	Work within organisational procedures and in partnership with others to plan an investigation into suspected harm or abuse		*	*
P3	Maintain a focus on safeguarding the person at risk throughout the investigation process		*	*
P4	Use persistence and assertiveness to gather direct evidence about the harm or abuse		*	*
P5	Co-ordinate other evidence from a variety of sources and disciplines to assess the level of risk		*	*
P6	Make a professional judgement in partnership with others on the level and nature of intervention required		*	*

P7	Develop options for achieving immediate and longer term outcomes		*	*
P8	Make recommendations in partnership with others about the intervention required		*	*
P9	Record information relating to the investigation accurately and in accordance with organisational and other requirements		*	*

Key Role 5: Plan for person centred outcomes	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
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NOS 14: Plan in partnership to address short and longer term issues
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P1	Support people to understand the planning process and their rights and responsibilities within it		*	*
P2	Work with people to agree the overall outcome that the plan should achieve		*	*
P3	Establish agreement on short, medium and long term objectives		*	*
P4	Support people to recognise resources within themselves, their personal networks and the community		*	*
P5	Explore with the people involved a range of possible solutions and their feasibility		*	*
P6	Formulate a plan based on collated information		*	*
P7	Establish agreement to the plan with those involved in it or affected by it		*	*
P8	Agree how the plan will be monitored and reviewed		*	*
P9	Record the plan and any issues or needs that the plan does not seek to address		*	*

NOS 15: Agree risk management plans to promote independence and responsibility

P1	Review your own and the organisation's legal and professional duties when supporting people to balance risks, rights and responsibilities		*	*
P2	Assess the individual's capacity to make decisions regarding risk		*	*
P3	Assess risk according to legal and organisational requirements		*	*

P4	Use assertiveness to ensure that the actions of others work in the best interests of the individual and take account of the wider community		*	*
P5	With the individual, develop a plan to minimise risks while maximising independence and the responsibility for taking positive risks		*	*
P6	Work with the individual and others to ensure they understand the reasons why specific safeguards need to be put in place			*
P7	Establish agreement to the plan with all those who will share the management of risk			*
P8	Agree a strategy for monitoring and reviewing the risk management plan			*
P9	Complete records of the risk management plan			*

NOS 16: Agree plans where there is risk of harm or abuse

P1	Analyse from the outcome of an investigation the degree of risk to a person, to their immediate or extended network, or to the community			*
P2	Collaborate with the person, those close to them, colleagues and professionals from other disciplines to develop a plan that will protect the person, those in their networks and the community		*	*
P3	Support the person to be as fully involved as possible in the planning process		*	*
P4	Negotiate agreement on the least restrictive and least damaging plan of action that will offer short term safety in respect of the risks evidenced			*
P5	Develop a long-term therapeutic plan to restore or continue to provide protection			*
P6	Review plans with others at agreed times			*
P7	Make changes to the plan in response to the trajectory of the intervention in consultation with others			*
P8	Produce professional records and reports to document plans, progress, changes to plans and outcomes		*	*

Key role 6: Take actions to achieve change

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

NOS 17: Apply methods and models of social work intervention to promote change

P1	Research a range of methods and models of social work intervention that may promote change in specific situations		*	*
P2	Analyse how your own professional and interpersonal skills can be demonstrated within methods and models of social work intervention		*	*
P3	Articulate your rationale for choosing particular interventions in specific situations		*	*
P4	Use your own professional and interpersonal skills to apply social work interventions		*	*
P5	Monitor through reflection in practice the effectiveness of the interventions in achieving change			*
P6	Revise interventions to take account of reflective monitoring			*

NOS 18: Access resources to support person centred solutions

P1	Confirm with the people involved the outcomes that resources are required to achieve		*	*
P2	Carry out actions needed to secure agreed resources		*	*
P3	Keep people informed of progress in securing resources		*	*
P4	Support people to deal with any unexpected or unwelcome news that may arise when securing resources		*	*
P5	Agree a way of monitoring and reviewing the use of resources, to meet the needs of both the people involved and the organisation		*	*
P6	Provide monitoring information on resources to meet organisational requirements and to inform service planning, commissioning strategies and capacity building		*	*
P7	Evaluate the effectiveness of resources in achieving outcomes for people over time		*	*

NOS 19: Evaluate outcomes of social work practice

P1	Review the intended outcomes of social work practice in specific situations		*	*
P2	Analyse information from a range of perspectives on progress towards outcomes		*	*

P3	In partnership with others, evaluate outcomes for individuals, their families or communities		*	*
P4	Analyse the outcomes for your own organisation			*
P5	Reflect on your own role and use of self in specific social work interventions			*
P6	In partnership with others, revise plans for practice and interventions to take account of evaluations			*
P7	Identify lessons learned that should inform your future practice and the work of your organisation		*	*
P8	Articulate how your own evaluations may contribute to the development of social work as a profession			*
NOS 20: Disengage at the end of social work involvement				
P1	Agree a plan for disengagement when the end of your involvement is approaching		*	*
P2	Explain to people the reasons for your forthcoming disengagement		*	*
P3	Provide people with information on the closure or continuity of support for them		*	*
P4	Arrange for the transfer or closure of information relating to social work involvement		*	*
P5	Complete required documentation to close your involvement		*	*

Appendix 4 – Mapping the NOS to Subject Benchmark Statements for Social Work

Level 1 – Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice

Code of Practice:

The student **describes, illustrates and applies** the *Code of Practice* through:

- their approach to professional and academic development;
- assessed work;
- practice learning;
- their conduct.

Progression towards National Occupational Standards

By the end of the *Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice* level, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate the interpersonal skills and values required in order for him or her to be suitable and safe to work with service users and carers; and
2. Demonstrate an understanding, directly from service users and carers, of the impact of social work practice upon them.
3. In reaching this judgement students will need to demonstrate they meet the following standards drawn from the NOS⁸:
 - seek professional supervision to develop accountable social work practice;
 - prepare for formal professional supervision in ways that maximise its effectiveness

Skills from Benchmark Statements for Social Work⁷

By the end of the *Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice* level, students should be able to:

- Manage problem solving activities
- Gather information
- Use a range of communication skills
- Reflect on and learn from the exercise of the their skills
- Demonstrate skills in personal and professional development
- Demonstrate skills in working with others
- Meet deadlines
- Demonstrate ICT and Numerical Skills

Subject Knowledge and Understanding from Benchmark Statements

By the end of the *Fitness to Proceed in Social Work Practice* level, students should have knowledge of:

- the underlying concepts and principles associated with social work, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of their study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of social work.

The knowledge should have been acquired and integrated in the following core areas:

- Social Work services, service users and carers

⁷ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statement-Social-work.aspx>

⁸ Taken from Performance Criteria from NOS numbers 2, 5 & 9. See appendix A for details.

Progression towards National Occupational Standards

- recognise ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts that arise in the course of social work practice;
- plan how to use communication to secure initial engagement

Skills from Benchmark Statements for Social Work⁷

Subject Knowledge and Understanding from Benchmark Statements:

- The service delivery context
- Values and Ethics
- Social Work Theory
- The nature of social work practice

Level 2 – Applying Knowledge Skills and Values in Social Work Practice

Code of Practice for Social Care Workers:

The student **analyses and evaluates their application of** the *Code of Practice for Social Care Workers* through:

- their approach to professional and academic development;
- assessed work;
- practice learning;
- their conduct.

Progression towards National Occupational Standards

By the end of the Applying Knowledge Skills and Values in Social Work Practice level, students should be able to demonstrate developing competence in the six key roles and 20 NOS as indicated in Appendix A.

Key role 1: Maintain professional accountability

1. Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice
2. Develop their social work practice through supervision and reflection

Key role 2: Practise professional social work

3. Manage their role as a professional social worker
4. Exercise professional judgement in social work
5. Manage ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts
6. Practise social work in multi-disciplinary contexts
7. Prepare professional reports and records relating to people

Key Role 3: Promote engagement and participation

8. Prepare for social work involvement
9. Engage people in social work practice
10. Support people to participate in decision-making processes
11. Advocate on behalf of people

Skills from Benchmark Statements for Social Work

By the end of the Applying Knowledge Skills and Values in Social Work Practice level, students should:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

These skills should have been acquired and integrated in the following core skill areas:

- problem-solving skills
 - managing problem-solving activities
 - gathering information
 - analysis and synthesis
 - intervention and evaluation
- communication skills
- skills in working with others
- skills in personal and professional development
- ICT and numerical skills

Subject Knowledge and Understanding from Benchmark Statements

By the end of the Applying Knowledge Skills and Values in Social Work Practice level, students should have:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of social work, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- the ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including the application of those principles in practice
- have knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in social work, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

This knowledge should have been acquired and integrated in the following core areas of study:

- social work services, service users and carers
- the service delivery context
- values and ethics
- social work theory
- the nature of social work practice

Progression towards National Occupational Standards

Skills from Benchmark Statements for Social Work

Subject Knowledge and Understanding from Benchmark Statements:

Key Role 4: Assess needs, risks and circumstances

12. Assess needs, risks and circumstances in partnership with those involved

13. Investigate harm or abuse

Key Role 5: Plan for person centred outcomes

14. Plan in partnership to address short and longer term issues

15. Agree risk management plans to promote independence and responsibility

16. Agree plans where there is risk of harm or abuse

Key Role 6: Take actions to achieve change

17. Apply methods and models of social work intervention to promote change

18. Access resources to support person centred solutions

19. Evaluate outcomes of social work practice

20. Disengage at the end of social work involvement

Level 3 – Development and Confirmation of Competence in Social Work Practice

Code of Practice for Social Care Workers:

The student **integrates the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers and critically analyses their application** through:

- their approach to professional and academic development;
- assessed work;
- practice learning;
- their conduct.

National Occupational Standards

By the end of the Development and Confirmation of Competence in Social Work Practice level, students should be able to:

Key role 1: Maintain professional accountability

1. Maintain an up to date knowledge and evidence base for social work practice
2. Develop their social work practice through supervision and reflection

Key role 2: Practise professional social work

3. Manage their role as a professional social worker
4. Exercise professional judgement in social work
5. Manage ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts
6. Practise social work in multi-disciplinary contexts
7. Prepare professional reports and records relating to people

Key Role 3: Promote engagement and participation

8. Prepare for social work involvement
9. Engage people in social work practice
10. Support people to participate in decision-making processes
11. Advocate on behalf of people

Skills from Benchmark Statements for Social Work

By end of the Development and Confirmation of Competence in Social Work Practice level students should have acquired and integrated skills in the following core skill areas:

- problem-solving skills
 - managing problem-solving activities
 - gathering information
 - analysis and synthesis
 - intervention and evaluation
- communication skills
- skills in working with others
- skills in personal and professional development
- ICT and numerical skills

On graduating with a social work degree, students should be able to demonstrate a developed capacity to:

- apply creatively a repertoire of core skills as detailed above
- communicate effectively with service users and carers, and with other professionals
- integrate clear understanding of ethical issues and codes of values, and practice with their interventions in specific situations

Subject Knowledge and Understanding from Benchmark Statements

By the end of the Development and Confirmation of Competence in Social Work Practice level students should have:

- a sound understanding of the five core areas of knowledge and understanding relevant to social work, an ability to use this knowledge and understanding in an integrated way, in specific practice contexts
- an ability to use this knowledge and understanding to engage in effective relationships with service users and carers
- appraisal of previous learning and experience and ability to incorporate this into their future learning and practice
- acknowledgement and understanding of the potential and limitations of social work as a practice-based discipline to effect individual and social change
- an ability to use research and enquiry techniques with reflective awareness, to collect, analyse and interpret relevant information
- a developed capacity for the critical evaluation of knowledge and evidence from a range of sources.

National Occupational Standards	Skills from Benchmark Statements for Social Work	Subject Knowledge and Understanding from Benchmark Statements
<p>Key Role 4: Assess needs, risks and circumstances</p> <p>12. Assess needs, risks and circumstances in partnership with those involved</p> <p>13. Investigate harm or abuse</p> <p>Key Role 5: Plan for person centred outcomes</p> <p>14. Plan in partnership to address short and longer term issues</p> <p>15. Agree risk management plans to promote independence and responsibility</p> <p>16. Agree plans where there is risk of harm and abuse.</p> <p>Key Role 6: Take actions to achieve change</p> <p>17. Apply methods and models of social work intervention to promote change</p> <p>18. Access resources to support person centred solutions</p> <p>19. Evaluate outcomes of social work practice</p> <p>20. Disengage at the end of social work involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistently exercise an appropriate level of autonomy and initiative in individual decision-making within the context of supervisory, collaborative, ethical and organisational requirements • demonstrate habits of critical reflection on their performance and take responsibility for modifying action in light of this. 	<p>This knowledge should have been acquired and integrated in the following core areas of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social work services, service users and carers • the service delivery context • values and ethics • social work theory • the nature of social work practice

Appendix 5 – Information, Communication and Technology Requirements of Social Work Students

QAA Benchmark Statements for Social Work⁹ Information and Communication Technology Requirements

ICT and numerical skills

Honours graduates in social work should be able to use ICT methods and techniques to support their learning and their practice. In particular, they should demonstrate the ability to:

- use ICT effectively for professional communication, data storage and retrieval and information searching
- use ICT in working with people who use services
- demonstrate sufficient familiarity with statistical techniques to enable effective use of research in practice
- integrate appropriate use of ICT to enhance skills in problem-solving in the four areas set out in paragraph 6.2¹⁰
- apply numerical skills to financial and budgetary responsibilities
- have a critical understanding of the social impact of ICT, including an awareness of the impact of the 'digital divide'.

⁹ Taken from: Quality Assurance Agency – Subject Benchmark Statements for Social Work, 2008, paragraph 5.9.

¹⁰ "The learning processes in social work at honours degree level can be expressed in terms of four inter-related themes.

- **Awareness raising, skills and knowledge acquisition** – a process in which the student becomes more aware of aspects of knowledge and expertise, learns how to systematically engage with and acquire new areas of knowledge, recognises their potential and becomes motivated to engage in new ways of thinking and acting.
- **Conceptual understanding** – a process in which a student acquires, examines critically and deepens understanding (measured and tested against existing knowledge and adjustments made in attitudes and goals).
- **Practice skills and experience** – processes in which a student learns practice skills in the contexts identified in paragraph 4.4 and applies theoretical models and research evidence together with new understanding to relevant activities, and receives feedback from various sources on performance, enhancing openness to critical self-evaluation.
- **Reflection on performance** – a process in which a student reflects critically and evaluatively on past experience, recent performance, and feedback, and applies this information to the process of integrating awareness (including awareness of the impact of self on others) and new understanding, leading to improved performance".