

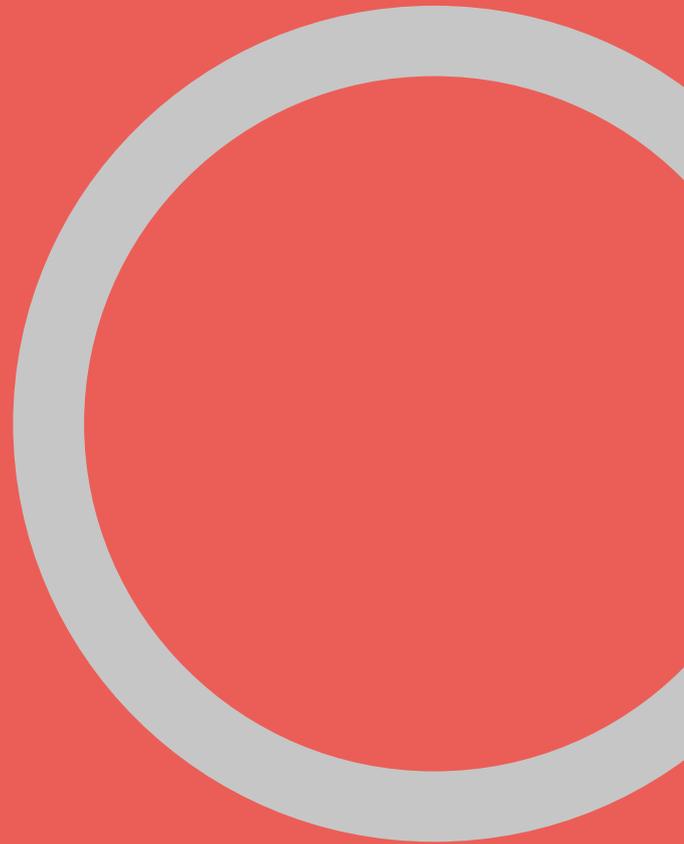


Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Specified named course requirements: Practice learning and assessment of social work students



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Other formats:

This document is available in easy read, large text or other formats, if required.

Copies also available in Welsh.

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Introduction

As the professional regulator of social work education and training, we are responsible for setting the standards for social work training at qualifying and post-qualifying levels. We want to make sure social workers in Wales are trained to a high and consistent standard, and that they are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to practise safely and effectively.

The Approval and Inspection of Post-Qualifying Courses for Social Workers (Wales) Rules 2018 provides the requirements and criteria for the approval and regulation of post-qualifying education and training. The Rules also allow us to set specific named course requirements for national programmes of learning. This can include setting out specific learning outcomes, level and credit volume, and/or assessment methods. Programmes will need to meet these specific course requirements, as well as the general requirements, to be approved.

This document sets out the specific requirements programme providers will have to meet to be approved by us to offer training for practice educators working with social work students. Practice learning is central to the provision of the social work degree in Wales. It enables students to develop their values, skills and knowledge in a range of settings. Social work degree programmes must make sure that all students are assessed in each period of practice by a qualified and experienced social worker who is, or is training to be, a qualified practice educator¹.

Practice educators have a range of responsibilities when working with students – promoting learning, teaching, assessing and managing the practice placement. They have a critical role in deciding if students have the sufficient skills and knowledge to become professional social workers. The effectiveness of their decision-making contributes to a high-quality and skilled workforce in which people can have confidence.

As part of our commitment to, and responsibility for, ensuring standards in social work, we have decided there should be a specified named course that

focuses on practice learning and the assessment of social work students.

These requirements make sure programmes:

- equip qualified and experienced social workers so they can carry out the role of practice educator in line with the expectations set out in the Rules for the degree in social work and the *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care*
- equip those who carry out the demanding role of practice educator with the right knowledge and skills so they can contribute to the student's learning in a planned and effective way, and make sound judgements about their competence in social work.

We recognise that, alongside these requirements, there needs to be flexibility as arrangements, roles and career pathways involving practice learning and assessment continue to evolve.

1. *The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales: Supplementary Guidance, Social Care Wales 2018 (7:9)*

Values

All the specified named course requirements we have developed build upon the values embedded in the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Social Work and the *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care*.

The NOS for Social Work set out the **values and ethics** that social workers and social work students must develop, apply and demonstrate:

- an awareness of your own values, prejudices, ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest, and their implications on your practice
- respect for and the promotion of:
 - each person as an individual
 - independence and quality of life for individuals, while protecting them from harm
 - dignity and privacy of individuals, families, carers, groups and communities
- recognise and support each person's use of their chosen language and form of communication
- value, recognise and respect the diversity, expertise and experience of individuals, families, carers, groups and communities
- maintain the trust and confidence of individuals, families, carers, groups and communities by communicating in an open, accurate and understandable way
- understand and make use of strategies to challenge discrimination, disadvantage and other forms of inequality and injustice.

The *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care* states that social care workers must:

1. Respect the views and wishes, and promote the rights and interests, of individuals and carers
2. Strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of individuals and carers

3. Promote the well-being, voice and control of individuals and carers while supporting them to stay safe
4. Respect the rights of individuals while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people
5. Act with integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the social care profession
6. Be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills
7. In addition to sections 1 to 6, if you are responsible for managing or leading staff, you must embed the Code in their work.

Programmes wishing to develop a course in practice learning and assessment of social work students must also uphold the principles stated in the *Standards for practice learning* and the *Standards for involving people in need of care or support and carers, in the degree in social work in Wales*².

These are:

- a partnership approach to all aspects of practice learning
- specific values including a commitment to anti-oppressive practice, equal opportunities and the Welsh language
- a creative approach to developing, implementing and sustaining practice learning opportunities to meet the changing needs of people in need of care and support, carers and students
- recognition of the diversity of student needs while ensuring equity
- the integral involvement of people in need of care or support and carers in practice learning.

Programmes of learning and assessment of candidates must be based on, and informed by, the value base of social work.

2. The standards are available on the [regulation of social work education and training](#) webpage

Regulations

1. Applications to provide a practice learning and assessment of social work students programme in Wales must be made in writing, in a format provided by Social Care Wales
2. The award can only be provided by one or more higher education institutions (HEI)
3. The programme provider must show, through signed partnership agreements, that the award has been developed with at least one employer who employs social workers and who will support the programme
4. The programme provider must involve people in need of care and support, and carers in the development and delivery of the programme
5. The programme provider must meet all the general requirements for approval of the award under *The Approval and Inspection of Post-Qualifying Courses for Social Workers (Wales) Rules 2018*
6. A provider that has already been approved to offer post-qualifying modules will be deemed to have met those requirements for the purpose of this specified named award. If more than one institution is involved in an application, each provider will need to demonstrate they meet, or have already been approved as meeting, all the requirements
7. The provider, if approved, will be subject to Social Care Wales's quality assurance requirements set out in *The Approval and Inspection of Post Qualifying Courses for Social Workers (Wales) Rules 2018*.

Requirements for a programme in practice learning and assessment of social work students

1. Credit and level

The award will be worth a minimum of 20 credits studied at level 6/7 of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (post-qualifying level).

2. Selection of candidates

Programmes must have documented selection procedures that support equal opportunities. The candidates who are selected must demonstrate they:

- are registered with Social Care Wales, Social Work England, the Scottish Social Services Council or Northern Ireland Social Care Council (they must remain on the register to obtain the ascribed credits)
- hold a recognised social work qualification
- have a minimum of two years' (or full-time equivalent) post-qualification experience
- have sufficient knowledge and experience for the type and level of programme, and the programme is relevant to their career development as defined in their personal development plan
- have the agreement and support of their employer to take part in all aspects of the programme
- have agreed to provide practice learning and assessment to a social work student to complete the course.

3. Learning outcomes to be demonstrated by candidates

When demonstrating how they've met the learning outcomes, candidates must include evidence of how in their capacity as a practice educator:

- they are using a critical appraisal of research as a base for their practice
- how they have involved people in need of care and support or carers in their practice and how they have responded to that expertise
- how their work has been informed by an understanding of effective interdisciplinary and inter-agency working
- they are working in line with the values and ethics of social work set out in the NOS for Social Work and the *Code of Professional Practice* when teaching and assessing social work students.

Having completed the programme, candidates must demonstrate their ability to choose and apply a range of skills, techniques and practices to enable social work students to learn and assess their competence.

Course providers will need to show how they demonstrate social work values, skills and principles in their programme content, models of delivery and assessment processes.

4. Skills outcomes

These are grouped under five headings and form the core skills of practice learning and assessment:

a. Demonstrate and integrate the NOS for social work and the Code of Professional Practice in all aspects of practice learning and assessment

- make effective and ongoing links between the Code of Professional Practice, the NOS, and the expectations of social work students and practice assessors
- place and promote practice teaching, learning and assessment in the Welsh context, including language sensitive practice
- model and explore how to work positively with difference and diversity in the context of social work and interdisciplinary working
- demonstrate fairness and equity in practice learning and assessing competence.

b. Manage the practice learning arrangements

- develop and implement an effective review of the working agreement with the student and others contributing to the learning opportunities and assessment
- plan, organise and ensure that appropriate learning opportunities are provided so the student can increasingly develop and demonstrate their competence
- negotiate the availability of necessary resources and working relationships for the student's practice learning opportunity
- manage and ensure the student's practice is safe and meets the expectations of the Code of Professional Practice and the agency.

c. Enable the social work student's learning and professional development in practice

- work in partnership to identify the student's learning needs using a range of theoretical and practical approaches
- select and apply appropriate teaching and learning strategies to support the student's ability to combine academic experiences, theory, research, critical reflection and practice
- provide regular and planned supervision using models of adult learning, theories of supervision and agency supervision policy to promote the student's professional development
- enable the student to develop critical awareness of the implications of legislation and policy within the context of the practice learning opportunity
- seek out and share current information and research on relevant best practice in social work with the student
- use anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive approaches to work in a way that acknowledges and addresses power differences in learning situations, especially in supervision and assessment
- establish an effective working relationship with the student, the degree programme, and people in need of care or support and carers who contribute to the student's professional development
- facilitate the student's inter-professional learning and working.

d. Assess social work students in practice

- develop and implement a plan for the student's assessment that is appropriate, developmental and fair
- use a range of agreed assessment tools including direct observation to gain information about the student's capabilities, and how the student applies the values and knowledge in their work
- carry out and provide constructive verbal and written formative assessment to the student in relation to the NOS, the degree expectations and the student's learning and practice
- work with people in need of care or support, carers and colleagues to get feedback, and use it to inform the learning strategy for, and assessment of, the student
- provide evidence-based summative assessment and judgement on the extent to which the student has met the NOS, the Code of Professional Practice and the required level of the degree.

e. Critically reflect on your experience of practice learning and assessment

- critically evaluate your ability to model how to integrate social work values, policy and legislation in practice
- critically analyse and evaluate your ability to apply your understanding of the degree in social work and the role of the practice assessor in the work setting, and policy developments in Wales
- demonstrate a critical awareness of the implications of working from an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive stance in the context of Wales when carrying out the role of practice educator
- analyse how you will use feedback from the student and others to develop your practice educator role

- reflect on how effectively you have responded to the opportunities and challenges the student has posed
- analyse the extent to which you have been able to effectively combine the different aspects of the role as educator/enabler/assessor.

Knowledge to underpin the learning outcomes

Programmes should enable candidates to use these areas of knowledge to underpin their practice as a practice educator and in critical reflection:

- the NOS, degree requirements, Code of Professional Practice, Social Work Benchmark Statements, the standards for practice learning and the standards for involving people in need of care or support and carers in the social work degree
- theories and models of adult learning and different approaches to teaching
- models of supervision and their application with social work students
- theories of power, research evidence on power differentials, and appropriate use of authority and accountability when working with learners
- research/best practice on involving people in need of care and support and carers when working with social work students, and viewing people in need of care and support and carers as experts because of their experience
- theories and models of social work and reflective practice
- principles of fairness and equity, objectivity and subjectivity in assessment, notions of development and competence, and what is "good enough"
- a critical understanding of the professional, ethical and political dilemmas of working in a contested profession such as social work.

5. Course assessment processes

- A range of assessment methods may be used
- Assessment methods may assess a number of learning outcomes simultaneously
- They must be appropriate to the learning outcome(s) being assessed and directly relevant to practice as a practice educator
- The candidate's practice as a practice educator must be directly observed twice in supervision sessions provided to the social work student and an assessment made of the candidate's competence as a practice educator
- These observations must be carried out by a designated person who is a qualified and experienced social worker with assessment experience and expertise who understands the core skills of practice learning and development
- Welsh-speaking assessors should be made available as identified when the assessment arrangements were put in place
- The role and responsibilities of the candidate's assessor should be clarified
- The candidate must put together an appropriately anonymised portfolio, which must include:
 - evidence that all the learning outcomes have been demonstrated
 - evidence of their ability to complete the tasks required by the degree programme to a satisfactory standard
 - theoretically-informed critical account(s) of their ability to reflect on their development and how they have applied their learning to the role and responsibilities of a practice educator
 - a report on the competence of the candidate as a practice educator, which draws on direct observation, feedback from the student and others.