

# PLC Exercise Tasks

## **Exercise 1**

### **Tuning In to Agency Setting**

1. What do you see as the main purpose of this agency and why do you feel this is important?
2. What are the main values or ethical issues or dilemmas for you in thinking about the sort of work that this agency does?
3. What are the key areas of knowledge that are going to be relevant for you during this practice learning period?
4. What are the gaps in your learning?
5. Identify the key skills you have that you feel will help you within this agency?
6. What skills do you need to develop or improve?
7. Finally, are you clear about Health and Safety issues and what concerns do you have, if any, in relation to personal protection issues?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW3 SW4**

**Completing this exercise will also be most helpful in assisting with the introduction section of your Practice Teacher Progress Report.**

## **Exercise 2**

### **Tuning In to Working with Families**

1. How would you define a family? To what degree are your views of family related to your religious, ethnic, and / or political beliefs?
2. What are your own experiences of 'family'?
3. What are your views about the use of physical punishments within families and do you feel there is such a thing as reasonable chastisement?
4. What are the main factors that you feel should lead from a family support focus to one of child protection and handling risk?
5. What are you most looking forward to in working with families under pressure?
6. What are your main concerns?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

### **Exercise 3**

#### **Tuning In to Working with Young People**

At a placement with young homeless people or young parents will no doubt present challenges to students as this service user group can be difficult to engage, it is important to begin to think around the issues that are inherent within this work. This service user group is in the 16+ age range.

1. How would you define this stage of life, drawing on your own experiences?
2. What do you think are the main factors for this particular group of service users in the transition period between leaving school and going to further training, education or employment?
3. What are the challenges and issues that this group of young people face within today's society?
4. In terms of supported accommodation how do you think a young person feels being in this type of establishment?
5. You may also have to work with the family/wider family of the service user with whom you are engaging, what do you think that the challenges will be within this?
6. What are your hopes and concerns in working with this particular service user group?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

#### **Exercise 4**

#### **Tuning In to Working with Domestic Violence**

It is worth taking a little time reflecting on the issues that are inherent within domestic violence and the underpinning complexities, there is also the question of how much of this type of violence reflects structural issues within society around power and control issues between men and women. In helping you prepare to work in this area reflect on the following questions for exploration in supervision:

1. What are your feelings in engaging in this sort of work?
2. What do you think are important elements in seeking to understand domestic violence and the experiences of the service users in the refuge?
3. How do you feel domestic violence should be responded to?
4. What are your hopes and concerns in relation to working within this setting?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

## **Exercise 5**

### **Tuning In to Working within a Mental Health Setting**

It is important to reflect on the various issues that will arise for you whilst on placement in MindWise and within a mental health setting. To assist you with this, below you will find a number of questions to answer and these will be explored either within group or individual supervision and will help you to prepare for working within this setting.

1. What are your feelings in engaging in this sort of work?
2. What do you think are important elements in seeking to understand working within a mental health setting and the experiences of the service users in either supported living or the resource centre?
3. How do you feel issues around mental ill health should be responded to?
4. What are your hopes and concerns in relation to working with this particular service user group?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8**

## **Exercise 6**

### **Tuning In to Working with the Homeless or those on Probation (bail hostel)**

In preparation for your placement at The Simon Community, please consider the questions below, your responses will be discussed in supervision.

1. What are your feelings in engaging in this sort of work?
2. What do you think are important elements in seeking to understand working with homeless people and the experiences of the service users who need supported accommodation?
3. How do you feel issues in relation to homelessness/offending/substance misuse should be responded to?
4. What do you think are the difficulties and challenges facing this particular service user group in the Northern Ireland of today?
5. What hopes and concerns do you have in relation to this work?

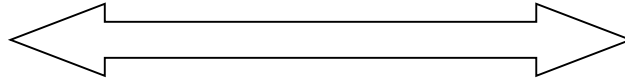
**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

## Exercise 7: Reflecting on Assessment

Reflect on the situation of the person or family you are assessing at the moment. In particular, where are you on the following continuums?

Which side of the page do you think your approach puts you on in terms of trying to assess and plan a positive way forward with this person or family?

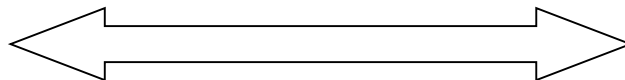
Have I preconceived ideas about what is needed?



Am I open minded about the situation?

Why?

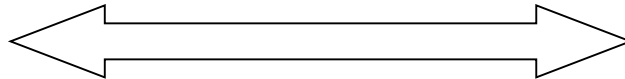
I have all the power



The process is empowering for the person or the family

Why?

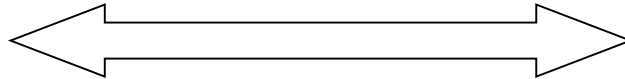
I am carrying out a standardised assessment



My assessment is relevant to the person or family

Why?

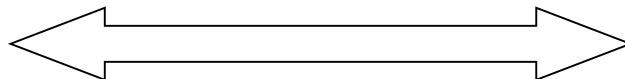
My assessment is about ticking boxes



My assessment is about trying to analyse complex information

Why?

I am gathering too much information



My assessment is relevant and focused

Why?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision may provide evidence for the Social Work Standards.**

(Adapted from Middleton, L. (1997) *The Art of Assessment* Birmingham Ventura Press)



### **Exercise 8: Action Learning: Participating at Courts / Formal Hearings**

(NB: This exercise may be completed if it has not been possible to access you to opportunities to engage with legal system and processes. It is relevant to any student, but particularly it may be helpful for level 2 students who will not yet have completed court work skills module. This exercise is designed to help you engage with practice learning requirement 'Participation and presentation to courts, tribunals, or other formal hearings'. In relation to the case we have agreed in supervision, in which the family have been involved in the Child Protection case conference system and/or the Family Court. You will then be able to reflect on the following issues for supervision:

1. How helpful have these formal hearings, tribunals and or court appearances been to this overall family situation?
2. What key messages from your work with this family (or members of it) or from what you know about the family, need to be fed into the formal legal process?
3. Prepare to present these in supervision (5 minutes) and to take some questions?
4. What skills, knowledge and values do social workers need to be effective in this type of work?
5. What are your developmental needs in relation to participating in and presenting to formal bodies?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

## **Reflective Exercise: Who Am I?**

These questions can be worked through individually, in supervision or in a group session, if and when appropriate.

- What is my cultural background? What images do I have of the culture from which I come? How does my culture relate to other cultures?
- How have I been/how am I affected by my class, current social stature, gender, race, ability, sexuality – and any other factors that I find important?
- What elements of my (a) personality, (b) social background, and (c) current social situation give me power
- What elements of the above make me feel a lack of power?
- In which contexts do I feel most powerful and least powerful?
- In what ways might I get stereotyped and by whom? Where do I think the power lies in these situations?
- How would I define my current culture and my central beliefs and values? Are these much different from those of my background, family etc? If so, what has been the cost of breaking away from earlier values, beliefs and customs? And the rewards?
- How do my answers to the above affect my approach to the social work task?
- How might the above answers affect my confidence and ability to function within this agency? In what situations might I feel it to be an advantage or a disadvantage?
- What are my existing and potential support systems? How easy is it for me to ask for help and trust that it will be forthcoming? Where do I most need support?
- Thinking about my life experiences, what knowledge, skills and strengths have I derived from these? How will they help to shape my social work practice?

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

## **Anti-Opressive Practice Supervision Worksheet**

### **Think about a service user or family with whom you are working.**

Oppression may be experienced as a result of factors such as “race”, colour, sex, age, class, disability, religion, poverty, sexual orientation, offending, drug user status etc

- What do you think might apply to this service user and why?
  
- How could you be oppressive in the way you work with them?
  
- How could you work anti – oppressively with them?
  
- Do you need to acquire new knowledge, develop skills in order to work anti-oppressively with them?
  
- If so, what is it / how might you do this?
  
- At the end of the piece of work, review your anti – oppressive practice with this service user.

**Completing this exercise and discussion in supervision will provide evidence for Social Work Standards SW1, SW8 & SW9**

**This exercise can be used to support a student in their development if necessary.**

**Feedback from on-site facilitator / line manager**

Please comment on the student's practice in relation to the following areas. These are the key roles that the student was expected to demonstrate competence. They reflect the National Occupational Standards for Social Work (2011).

1. Preparing for work with service users and assessing needs and circumstances:
  
2. Planning, carrying out, reviewing and evaluating work with service users:
  
3. Supporting service users to represent their needs, views and circumstances and to achieve greater independence:
  
4. Managing risk to service users, families, groups, communities, self, and colleagues:
  
5. Managing and being accountable, with supervision and support, for their own social work practice within the agency:
  
6. Demonstrating and being responsible for professional competence in social work practice:

Any other comments you wish to make:

Signed:

Date: