

SCC PRACTICE EDUCATION HANDBOOK

GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION

Social Work student placements in ACS & CYP



Welcome

Suffolk County Council is committed to creating, developing and sustaining quality learning opportunities for Social Work Students.

This Guidance is designed to help all involved in the process of supporting students through their placements.

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About the Placement – What’s involved

Currently all full and part-time social work students are expected to undertake a 10-day observation /assessment placement as part of their ‘Fitness to Practice’ (University of Suffolk) prior to their 170 days of placement practice.

University of East Anglia MA students require 5 day observational/shadowing placement prior to the 70 days. The current format is for the student to attend their practice placement first week in January to carry out the 5 days; week two is spent back in university; week three the 70-day placement begins. The 5 days can be quite complex so it advisable to arrange a pre-placement meeting as soon as possible.

10 days - Fitness to Practice placement

The attachment details what the student is required to do and information for PE/supervisor about what they need to assess to determine if the student is ready or not to practice as a Social Work student.

[CLICK HERE](#)

70 days first placement

On most courses, full time students on their 70-day placement undertake 3 days per week and 2 days at university.

100 days final placement

On most courses, full time students on their 100-day placement undertake 4 days per week and 1 day at university.

(Occasionally a university may request a student carry out their placement on a part-time basis, **this MUST be negotiated on an individual basis with the WFD Placement Co-ordinator**)

DfE Statutory Definition

The definition of 'statutory' within the context of the teaching partnership is as follows:

- Take place in a local authority setting or settings delivering delegated statutory functions on behalf of the local authority e.g. NHS trusts;
- Involve work on S17 and S47 cases (under the Children Act 1989);
- Involve work on delivering requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Care Act 2014;
- Require case records to be updated by the student, under appropriate supervision. Where PVIs offer placements that deliver statutory work, applications must clearly evidence how they are equivalent to statutory placements as defined above. In order to maximise capacity and provide students with the best possible learning experiences, it is proposed that students will undertake a placement that has an adult focus and one with a focus on children and families. Although priority will given to teams who meet the statutory criteria, broader service areas may be considered provided the following is in place:
 - Appropriately informed and experienced on-site supervisor can be identified
 - Appropriate PE can be identified in statutory sector to ensure oversight of learning objectives being achieved.
 - The student is offered opportunities to undertake a minimum of 2 statutory pieces of work.

If your student is going to be based in a CYP team that is not involved in S17 and S47 cases (under the Children Act 1989) they will need to have two learning opportunities to evidence statutory work (see statutory definition).

When you set up the learning agreement you must clearly identify and record the potential teams where the student can be placed for those learning opportunities (Practice Educator or On-site Supervisor to arrange). This will need to be reviewed at mid-way point.

The host team will need to be aware that the student will have arranged periods of time away accessing their statutory learning opportunities.

Expectations of the student within the team

The student will be subject to the same data confidentiality agreements as an employee of Suffolk County Council.

Students should be treated as a full member of the team but must be seen to be in a learning role, so the focus of the placement will be on having a broad range of learning experiences that enable the student to learn relevant skills, for example in communication, assessment, intervention, advocacy, and support and to acquire a deep understanding of the service user group and the legislative and policy framework in which the team operates.

During the placement students should experience managing protected supervised casework in preparation for employment.

Students cannot be case responsible or be 'assigned' to them on Care First 6/Liquid Logic.

Students may also require early in-house training to enable them to fulfil their tasks effectively whilst in placement. The Team Manager should organise mandatory training; E-Learning; CF6 / Liquid Logic; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Signs Of Safety (SOS) if available. If not, then SOS Practice Leads can support and will need to be arranged. To fulfil the requirements of the social work role a student must have access to either a desktop or laptop computer; mobile phone and headset.

What is expected for students in 70 and 100-day placements in CYP

[CLICK HERE](#)

What is expected for students in 70 and 100-day placements in ACS

[CLICK HERE](#)

Quality Assurance of Placements

Suffolk County Council maintain quality standard of placements by:

- Ensure all practice educators are registered with SCC and the regional Quality Assurance Practice Learning board (QAPL) and that they are appropriately qualified and have access to regular training
- Ensure all placements are subjected to Quality Assurance of Practice Learning processes including evaluation of placements by students, Practice Educators and HEI tutors – results of these inform the development of placements and training needs.
- Expect all those involved in providing placements i.e. On-site Supervisors, Practice Educators and Mentor/Assessors to attend university provided workshops and relevant professional development training. These will cover a wide range of information and support to help the practice education process to run smoothly for their students.
- Ensure that Practice Educators meet, or are working towards, the BASW Practice Educator Professional Standards for social work (PEPS) requirements

Setting up and managing a placement (roles and responsibilities)

All social work student placements must be arranged through the Suffolk County Council Placement Co-ordinator.

Team Managers and Practice Educators must not informally offer placements directly to students. This ensures meeting appropriate standards, equity for students and the effective management and support of placements.

It is the responsibility of the Practice Educator to organise the HR [Student Placement Appointment Form](#) and return it to: recruitment@suffolk.gov.uk.

This must be completed urgently once you have agreed to host the student. (It may be a function that a Manager or Business Support staff member may complete, but it is the Practice Educator's responsibility to check the form is completed). This will allow relevant HR and IT processes to take place and will support the timely issue of laptop, and mobile phone equipment for you student.

Placement Matching

The Placement Team matches the 10-day Observation/assessment Fitness to Practice placement, 70 and 100-day placements in 2 cohorts of around 70 students a time.

Therefore, once a placement is matched this will go ahead unless there is clear rationale for the placement to be declined.

Students may have a disability or health problem, or learning difficulty such as dyslexia, which may need equipment provision or other adjustments in the placement. Students are asked to declare these in the student profile form so that the issues can be discussed, and adjustments made as necessary. University student support services can assess students and assist in securing equipment and/or give advice on any provisions required.

Pre-placement Meeting

What is the aim of the meeting?

This is an informal meeting offering the student the opportunity to meet the Practice Educator and host team and to discuss how the practice placement will meet the student's learning needs in relation to the BASW Professional Capabilities Framework and the HCPC the Standards of Proficiency for Social Work.

Profiles should be exchanged by both the student and the Practice Educator prior to this meeting.

Who should attend?

Practice educator
On-site supervisor
Student

What should the student bring?

- A number of identity documents. *Copies should be signed, dated and stored locally. You do not need to send copies of ID to HR*
- A recent portfolio and/or a current placement report/academic assignment to enable a clear assessment of learning needs and skills

There is an expectation that the student will be offered the placement following this meeting and in order to move this forward, please agree a start date with the student and inform the Suffolk County Council Placement Co-ordinator of this.

There may be exceptional circumstances when the placement is not suitable for the student, such as a conflict of interest being identified, and in the event of this occurring please inform the Suffolk County Council Placement Co-Ordinator of this decision as soon as possible and the reasons for this.

HR Process

How to set up a new student social worker

Complete the [Student Placement Appointment Form](#) and return it to: [Recruitment](#)

Student placements do not require authorisation from your Directorate Management Team.

Please note the following information when completing the Student Placement Appointment Form:

1. Copies of evidence should be signed, dated and stored locally and not sent to HR. HR will accept your signature as proof that you have carried out the checks sufficiently.
2. Clearly state that the person is a STUDENT SOCIAL WORKER on nil pay and zero hours.
3. HR will create a new “post” number in your team entitled Student Social Worker
4. The student will also need to complete a [bank details form](#). This can be done once they have started. The form must be sent to HR so that their expenses can be paid direct.
5. The students will have a payroll number and full access to the HR Self Service system under your line management and this allows them to book on courses etc and also to submit their expense claims online and be paid direct to their bank account.
6. Because the students are attached to S80 payroll they will ‘look like’ employees however this should not present too much of a problem.

Ending your student’s registration with HR

It is very important that as soon as the student leaves the placement you inform HR immediately of the date of leaving and ensure that IT Helpdesk are asked to cancel the student’s log-in. Please see [How do I make a student a leaver?](#) for full details.

Induction

It is important that the on-site Practice Educator and/or On-site Supervisor is in the office to meet the Student on their first day.

If this is a 100 day placement the student should bring with them a copy of the final report from their previous placement.

Your team should provide a two-week induction into your specific area of work.

This could include things like:

Tour of the building

Housekeeping

ID Badge

Team list

Roles

Contact names/numbers

Localities map

Service/organisational structure chart

List of mandatory training

Shadowing opportunities/visits to other teams (this may be better further into the placement)

Parking arrangements

Mileage arrangements

Lunch/tea/coffee arrangements

Details of who will allocate work to the student

Who to report to in absence of PE/OSS, supervision agreement

Identify any key reading (legislation/policy)

Address any additional needs

Team Manager to organise mandatory training; E-Learning; Liquid Logic; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Signs Of Safety (SOS) if available. If not, then SOS Practice Leads can support and will need to be arranged.

Learning Agreement

The Learning Agreement needs to happen within the first 10 days of placement.

Ideally the learning agreement meeting should be attended by the University Tutor, Student, Practice Educator (and On-site Supervisor if applicable) and should layout the experience the student will receive whilst on placement.

The learning agreement document is provided by the University and the student has the overall responsibility for completing it. The student liaises with the Practice Educator and Tutor to complete as much of it **prior** to the Learning Agreement meeting where it can be updated and amended.

CYP only - If student is in a non-statutory defined team.

The Learning Agreement must be sent to the Teaching Partnership Practice Education Leads / WFD to ensure everything is covered.

If your student is going to be based in a team that is not involved in S17 or S47 cases (under the Children Act 1989) they will need to have two learning opportunities to evidence statutory work (see statutory definition Pg. 4)

Begin this statutory experience after the mid-way point. It is important the student first familiarises themselves with the host team, processes and procedures before progressing to the statutory experience.

When you set up the learning agreement you must clearly identify and record the potential teams where the student can be placed for those learning opportunities (Practice Educator or On-site Supervisor to arrange).

Payments

Once qualified, Practice Educators and On-site Supervisors each receive an honorarium payment for taking students.

Paid at the end of the placement via submission from the Practice Educator of the:

- Student's Attendance Record
- e-copy of the Final Report, including the student's Future Learning Plan and completion of any PE or Team profile documents (if requested).

Payment of:

£9 per day for Practice Educators

£2 per day for On-site supervisors

The Team also receives a payment of £2 per day which will be paid at the end of the placement by submitting the payment claim. This contribution is to help enable the team to offer a student placement e.g. books, training, or IT equipment.

Claim form

[CLICK HERE](#)

Placement set up and contracts

Student travel costs incurred while they are on placement will be covered by the host team budget.

To enable the student to maximise their learning, travel time should be kept to a minimum.

Laptop / mobile is the Practice Educator's responsibility to arrange as detailed in HR section of this guidance.

The Suffolk County Council Placement Co-ordinator must be informed of the start date of placement if different from original plans so that the necessary paperwork can be made for payments and monitoring

Team Around the Student

Each individual university provides its own Practice Education Handbook. They may slightly differ from each other, but will contain full information on the university's specific course, placements, timetables, key meetings, support, assessment requirements, portfolio requirements (if applicable) Tutor names, etc. Some universities will ask the student to be responsible for arranging the Learning Agreement meeting, ensuring that all parties are available and can attend.

Practice Educators are expected to ensure the quality of the student's learning experience; overseeing the student induction, integration into the team, monitoring the level and quality of the learning experiences afforded to the student, and ensuring that the student is treated as a member of the team while maintaining a 'learning role'. Practice educator (on-site) are based in the team offering the student placement. Practice educators are required to provide 90 minutes of one-to-one supervision per week as a minimum requirement. Where there are a number of students in a placement and group supervision is offered, it is important that students are also provided with individual sessions as per the HEI's requirement. The Practice Educator (On-site and/or Off-Site) will keep a written record of the supervision sessions indicating the issues that arose, decisions reached, action to be taken and by whom. These documents must be signed at the end of each supervision session by student and Practice Educator. Should any dispute arise tutors may require copies of these documents for clarity and assessment purposes.

On site supervisors provide the day to day oversight and supervision of the student based within the team. OSS work in partnership with the Practice Educator. OSS should input to the student's supervision sessions on alternate weeks with the Practice Educator.

University Tutors /Personal Advisors are allocated to each student. They maintain an overview of the student's progress and assess their general progress and development including their academic work. They visit the student and Practice Educator / Assessor during the period of practice learning to formally review progress, learning and development and to identify and address any learning issues, concerns or placement difficulties. They will inform the Programme Leader and other relevant Programme Team members of any significant changes in the student's circumstances which may affect their success on the Programme, having first discussed the matter with the student.

Placement breakdown and failing students

The vast majority of student placements prove to be very successful and provide a positive experience for all concerned. However, a small number of placements run into difficulty and therefore require additional support.

Each University Handbook will contain the guidance. [The Practice Educator should notify the SCC Placement Co-ordinator.](#)

What to do if you have concerns about your student or placement

[CLICK HERE](#)

Failure Report Guidance

This should be completed on the university's final report template.

It should be linked to the PCF and KSS with clear evidence of the progress of the student as well as highlighting areas of concern.

Supporting evidence could include:

- * Supervision notes
- * Direct observations
- * Feedback from any member of the team around the student
- * Feedback from customers/ multi-agency partners
- * Evidence from action plans
- * Evidence from concerns meeting

Useful Links to other Sources

[Health and Care Professions Council \(HCPC\)](#)

[Professional Capability Framework](#)

[Knowledge and Skills Statements \(ACS\)](#)

[Knowledge and Skills Statements \(CYP\)](#)

[Practice Education Network for SW \(PENSW\) – University of Suffolk](#)

Online information resource for all Practice Educators and On-site supervisors.

Please contact Louise Barley L.Barley@uos.ac.uk to be granted access

[British Association of Social Work \(BASW\)](#)