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**“Working to Empower the Community”
in Lancashire and Cumbria**

Pamela Beswick - Chief Executive Officer

*Community
Legal Service*



Help Point

Social Work Placement Handbook

**Explaining the learning opportunities at Signposts and
what is involved with your placement process**

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Contents

Introduction.....	2
Confidentiality Statement.....	3
1. About the Organisation.....	4
a) Signposts Multi Agency Resource Centre	4
b) Learning Opportunities at Signposts	6
c) Understanding our Client Group	7
d) Understanding the role of Community Workers	9
2. The Placement Process	10
a) Roles and Responsibilities	10
c) Supervision and reflective log	12
d) Observed Practice.....	13
e) Reports.....	14
f) Placement Concerns or issues.....	14
3. Useful Information and Reading	15
Social Policy.....	15
Resources at Signposts	15
Bibliography for this handbook.....	15
Appendix A - Learning Opportunities linked to Key Roles.....	16
Appendix B - Community Profiling.....	23
Appendix C - Supervision Guidelines	27
Appendix D - Placement Evaluation	28
Appendix E - Casework Processes on Procedure.....	31

Introduction

This handbook is designed to introduce you to our organisation and to take you through the placement processes.

It should be used in conjunction with the Signposts website www.signposts.org.uk, and throughout there are instructions to guide you to appropriate pages and links.

There are also a number of appendices that offer information and include information for supervision.

At the end of the handbook is a feedback form which we would appreciate you completing at the end of your placement.

Confidentiality Statement

Signposts(MARC)Ltd works within a confidentiality framework which ensures that all aspects of people's interaction with the organisation is confidential in relation to information sharing and anti oppressive practice. This applies to all clients, staff and students on placement.

The organisation has a 'Confidentiality Policy (including Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding)' which outlines the process and situations in which information sharing is implemented.

The organisation also has a 'Whistle Blowing Policy' that ensures anyone who is involved with us, at whatever level, can identify and report issues or concerns knowing that no action will be taken against them.

In all aspects of your placement including your interventions with clients as well as information gathered about you for the purposes of reporting and practice learning, it is expected that confidentiality will be adhered to in accordance with the above policy above.

Please download both policies from our website, read them fully and should you have any queries or questions ask your Practice Educator as soon as possible.

The full version of all policies can be found on the website www.signposts.org.uk, click on 'Our Policies' and then click the link to show the full version of each policy

1. About the Organisation

a) Signposts Multi Agency Resource Centre

Signposts is an organisation that "works to empower the community" by developing and delivering a range of targeted services that are accessible and affordable to everyone. The services we develop aim to address the needs of the most disadvantaged and hard to reach people within their communities. The projects we deliver are diverse and creative, and are often delivered in partnership with other organisations.

The agreed values on which the Service is based are:

- everyone should be seen as unique and individual and accorded dignity, respect and status
- service users should be given opportunities to develop skills and capabilities that enable them to make choices and take decisions about their lives
- comments or complaints about services can be used positively to highlight or remedy service deficiencies
- relationships with service users should be conducted in an open manner
- confidentiality is a major right

For full details about the organisation's projects, staff and buildings can be found at www.signposts.org.uk

Other useful documents that will provide you with information about the organisation are:

- Annual Report and Accounts www.signposts.org.uk click on downloads
- Monthly Team Bulletin www.signposts.org.uk click on 'team info' and then 'team bulletin' (password protected)

Policies and Procedures:

Policies and procedures are the framework which describes what an organisation does and how it does it. With clear, workable policies, staff and clients will have clear guidelines as to what the service offers and how it is offered. They are there to maintain safety and comply within the law.

To support its work, Signposts developed a number of policies and procedures which are reviewed and updated annually:

- Allegations against Staff
- Complaints Procedure (easy read version)
- Confidentiality Policy (including Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection -safeguarding)
- Conflicts of Interest within Service Delivery
- Data Protection
- Environment and Sustainability
- Equal Opportunities
- Health & Safety
- Home Working
- Info and Advice
- ICT, Internet and Communications
- Implementation of Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and Deprivation of Liberty (DOLS)
- Information Governance
- Lone Working
- Mobile Phone
- Recruitment of Ex Offenders
- Remote Access - ICT
- Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures
- Smoke, Alcohol and Drug Free Policy
- Supervision at Signposts
- Supporting Student Placements and Social Work Student Handbook
- Supporting Volunteers and Volunteers Handbook
- Team Health and Wellbeing
- Team Training and Development
- Travel
- Volunteer Childcare Policy and Claim Form
- Washer Drier Shower
- Whistleblowing
- Young People Contraception Advice
- Drug and Alcohol Policy - client based work

The full version of all policies can be found on the website www.signposts.org.uk, click on 'Our Policies' and then click the link to show the full version of each policy

b) Learning Opportunities at Signposts

Signposts has a number of projects across Lancashire and Cumbria, covering a variety of interventions and methods with which to engage and support clients:

- Information and Advice - one stop shop; outreach in community venues; attending events and activities.
- Group work - young people; gender specific work; issue based work; forum development.
- Case work - assessments and goal panning.
- Events and activities - working with communities to promote positive engagement and to enable access/information to our services.
- Partnership working - inter-agency work at point of delivery; joint Service Level Agreements.

The issues we deal with are diverse and often complex, including:

- Housing and homelessness.
- Alcohol and drug misuse.
- Poverty and debt.
- Domestic violence.
- Mental health and well being.
- Parenting needs.
- Children and young people including young carers
- Family Support

Our organisation has access to registered Social Workers so we are able to take both first and second placement students.

The learning opportunities offered by the Signposts placement is shown in full in Appendix A.

c) Understanding our Client Group

Signposts uses the term 'client' to describe people who access our services.

As a student and potential Social Worker it is important to consider the groups of people you will be working with during your time on placement and how your intervention can impact on their lives.

As part of your induction you will have an opportunity to access client files via our electronic database, but to give you a brief insight into our clients and the work we do the following case studies should help you:

Case Study 1 - Young Inspectors Project

K joined the project and explained that he got into trouble at school and was not achieving his potential in lessons. During the training and inspections K really engaged and produced some excellent work. K built good relationships with his fellow young inspectors and during the inspection showed a new found confidence in talking to managers of services. The process allowed K to gain new confidence and raise his aspirations in what he wanted to do in the future.

Case Study 2 - Family Support / Targetted Youth Support

A+B were carers for their mum who has a physical disability. A+B accessed the primary group and enjoyed having a break and not having to worry about mum. The family support team also worked with mum around A+B's education, benefits and support when she felt she was struggling with A+B. The family support team were able to liaise with school and resolve the issues and ensure that A+B continued to attend school. The team also worked with mum to resolve issues around debt and check their benefit levels. A+B continue to access the service and have settled down more.

Case Study 3

Homeless Prevention

A woman from the Traveller Community accessed our service due to experiencing deteriorating health and wishing to find more suitable accommodation. She currently lives in a caravan and felt that she would benefit from moving to a house. We have supported her to make applications to Council and Housing Associations and worked through the process of this, including appointments with housing officers and gathering medical information. She uses our service to make contact with agencies; meet with housing staff and to understand the waiting list and points systems. The case is on-going and the client will continue to access the project until her new accommodation is achieved.

Case Study 4 Information and Advice Project

A woman presented who was unable to put credit on to her electric meter. She had been having problems with the meter since she had moved into her flat. After a number of phone calls we were able to identify who her provider was, having moved into a building that had recently been adapted, it transpired that she had been given the registration number for the wrong meter, every time she set up her payment card the woman in the next flat cancelled it as she had the corresponding meter. We eventually got the right registration and the woman was able to use the credit on her card and use her utilities.

d) Understanding the role of Community Workers

The placement opportunity at Signposts offers a number of interventions and this includes working with communities and groups. The placement demonstrates how social care work can use community development methods and interventions to support clients, carers and their families.

As Keith Popple and Paul Stepney (2008) write in *Social Work and the Community, A Critical Context for Practice*:

'The concept of community has always occupied an important place in the development of British social work as well as in its contemporary theory and practice. Although the term may be considered contested and contradictory, there is no doubt that in relation to social work, community has enjoyed a position of some significance. For example, Eileen Younghusband's report on the role of social workers in local authority health and welfare services identified community work as one of the three key constituents of social work.' (page 6)

The following gives a good description of the community development worker role, taken from the website 'Prospects Graduate Careers'

'A community development worker works with particular communities in order to collectively bring about social change and improve quality of life. They work with individuals, families or whole communities to empower them to:

- identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities;
- plan what they want to achieve, and take appropriate action;
- develop activities and services to improve their lives.

Community development workers are frequently involved in addressing inequalities, and projects often target communities perceived to be disadvantaged, for example due to race, economic circumstances or geography.

They seek to engage communities actively in making sense of the issues which affect their lives, setting goals for improvement and taking action through empowerment and participative processes. A good deal of the work is project-based and the setting can be either urban or rural. Specialised community work focuses on specific issues or groups.

2. The Placement Process

a) Roles and Responsibilities

Signposts has a number of Practice Educators that support Social Work students. We do not usually allocate a work based supervisor during your placement, but instead you will have a 'line manager' who will work closely with yourself and Practice Educator to allocate your work programme. As a student you may be involved with more than one project and therefore may have more than one line manager. The implementation your work programme will be done with your Practice Educator, as main point of contact, ensuring clarity of your work programme and clear understanding of management responsibilities.

Practice Educators at Signposts will adhere to the following values as outlined in the *GSCC Guidance on the Assessment of Practice in the Work Place 2002*:

- identify and question their own values and prejudices, the use of authority and power in the assessment relationship, and recognise and act upon the implications for their assessment practice;
- update themselves on best practice in assessment and research on adult learning and apply this knowledge in promoting the rights and choices of learners and managing the assessment process;
- respect and value the uniqueness and diversity of learners and recognise and build on their strengths, and take into account individual learning styles and preferred assessment methods;
- accept and respect learners' circumstances and understand how these impact on the assessment process;
- assess in a manner that does not stigmatise or disadvantage individuals and ensures equality of opportunity. Show applied knowledge and understanding of the significance of
 - poverty
 - racism
 - ill health and disability
 - gender
 - social class
 - sexual orientation
 - in managing the assessment process;

- recognise and work to prevent unjustifiable discrimination and disadvantage in all aspects of the assessment process, and counter any unjustifiable discrimination in ways that are appropriate to their situation and role; and
- take responsibility for the quality of their work and ensure that it is monitored and appraised; critically reflect on their own practice and identify development needs in order to improve their own performance, raise standards, and contribute to the learning and development of others.

Students

Students are expected to fully participate in the placement process and to consider the following in relation to their roles and responsibilities:

- Representation of the organisation
- Working within policies and procedures
- Communication
- Using skills and knowledge

b) Induction

The purpose of induction is to familiarise you with the procedures, policies and activity of the organisation. Your induction can take up to 2 weeks and will involve a variety of reading, presentations, shadowing, visiting partner agencies and community profiling.

Signposts website www.signposts.org.uk has an induction page (click on 'Team Info' and then 'Induction Information and Worker Handbook') providing:

Week 1

The first week of your induction will focus on the organisation, the team and the local community. You will work with your Practice Educator and other team members to ensure that you have a full understanding of:

- the organisation's interventions and processes
- policies and procedures
- monitoring
- referrals
- paperwork - timesheets; expenses form
- supervision
- health and safety issues
- base familiarisation
- meet key members of the team
- allocation of mobile phone and ID badge
- relevant social policy information

- visiting relevant partner agencies
- Introductory supervision session to include roles, responsibilities and expectations

You will also begin to research and explore the local community (Community Profiling) to gain an understanding of the needs and issues faced. Appendix B gives you information on Community Profiling that will be useful to you as you go through the induction process.

Week 2

The second week of induction will focus on you becoming familiar with the projects you will be working on. This will include:

- shadowing team members,
- contacting staff linked to projects and discussing their roles and responsibilities,
- visiting partner agencies,
- continue community profiling,
- understanding the aims and objectives of each project,
- reading client files and understanding the case work process
- supervision with Practice Educator to include induction checklist, outstanding issues and planning work programme.

c) Supervision and reflective log

Supervision sessions are designed to be a regular opportunity for you to discuss your placement at Signposts. They offer you an organised time and safe space to consider your learning opportunities and explore your professional development. Supervision can also offer mutual space to consider ways in which the organisation can benefit from your knowledge and experience.

You will receive one or more hours of direct supervision each week. A variety of supervision sessions will be used which includes:

- Individual sessions with your Practice Educator
- Group sessions with other students on placement facilitated by Practice Educator or other appropriate team member.
- Peer group sessions with other students on placement.

Supervision content

Each session will include the following items for discussion:

- General information about work achieved since last session
- Feedback on tasks/actions from previous session
- Issues, concerns, questions
- Case reviews
- Key roles and identifying theory, methods and social policy

In addition to the planned and structured sessions you will be able to access advice, consultation and support as and when needed. This will be with appropriate line managers, colleagues and Practice Educator who are all accessible to you via email, mobile phone or face to face.

Appendix C gives Signposts Supervision guidelines, which should ensure that your supervision sessions are an appropriate, informative and effective learning tool. The guidelines highlight expectations around:

- When, where and how
- Confidentiality
- Recording and storage

Reflective log

As part of your learning and development it is recommended that you keep a reflective log that enables you to reflect on experiences. Each Practice Assessor will discuss and negotiate with you how the reflective log will be used.

d) Observed Practice

As a student you are observed throughout the placement which includes informal and formal work settings. The opportunity for feedback from colleagues and clients can be gathered at any time throughout your placement.

Observed practices offer an opportunity for a structured format in which your practice and communication can be evaluated. The observation is one tool amongst a variety of evaluation methods that are used to support you to reflect on your practice and identify areas for learning.

Preparation for practice observation will form part of your supervision sessions. The sessions will discuss a number of items enabling you to feel as prepared and confident as possible when being observed:

- Where, when and with who
- Discussing the observation with the client
- Roles of each person taking part in the observation
- Reporting and gaining feedback
- Questions and concerns
- Possible scenarios and unexpected events

The writing up of the observation will be done as a joint exercise between yourself and your Practice Educator reflecting on your experience, professional learning and positive outcomes.

e) Reports

The placement requires a number of reports to be written and submitted as part of your portfolio. The writing up of each report will be done as a joint exercise between yourself and your Practice Educator reflecting on your experience, professional learning and positive outcomes.

Your responsibility to the reporting process is to identify areas of work where you feel you have met the 6 Key Roles; how you feel you have developed during the placement; any specific pieces of work or case studies that demonstrate your achievements and any further work needed.

The Practice Educator is responsible for identifying how you have achieved the 6 Key Roles; how you have developed during the placement; any specific pieces of work or case studies that demonstrate your achievements and any further work needed.

The Practice Educator is responsible for writing the report within deadlines specified by the university with you, as the student, being responsible for gathering all information needed, submitting your sections of the report within agreed deadlines and ensuring relevant paperwork is in your portfolio.

Feedback from colleagues and clients

This is a joint responsibility between the Practice Educator and student. Gathering feedback can be done by:

- noting comments made by colleagues or clients during the placement
- structured feedback using questionnaires
- formal feedback by requesting written statements from colleagues or clients on your skills as a social work practitioner.

f) Placement Concerns or issues

Whilst we strive to ensure each student receives a comprehensive and effective learning opportunity, there are times when concerns or issues occur which need to be addressed. We expect that all those involved with the placement, raise any concerns or issues at the earliest possible opportunity with the student, the Practice Educator and university tutor.

3. Useful Information and Reading

Social Policy information can be found at www.directgov.uk Department of Health at www.dh.gov.uk

Young People National Youth Agency www.nya.org.uk

Resources at Signposts

There are a number of resources within our venues. These include books, reports, toolkits and DVDs relating to all aspects of our work.

Unfortunately we do not have a comprehensive list but please feel free to explore the resources and make use of them to further your understanding of our organisation and related social care work. We do not allow the resources to be taken away, but you can use your placement time to read and research the items within our buildings.

Bibliography for this handbook

Community Profiling website (2009)

http://www.infed.org/community/community_profiling.htm

General Social Care Council and TOPPS (2002) 'Guidance on the Assessment of Practice in the Work Place'.

www.gsccl.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1D9B7764-29FC-4710-8950-2714F51C208C/0/guidance.pdf

Popple, K. and Stepney P., (2008). 'Social Work and the Community, A Critical Context for Practice'. England: Macmillan

Prospects Graduates Careers website (2008)

www.prospects.ac.uk/p/types_of_job/community_development_worker_job_description.jsp#section1

Appendix A – Learning Opportunities linked to Key Roles

Key Role 1	Explain with examples how the units of each Key Role can be met
Unit 1 Prepare for social work contact and involvement	<p>Induction process including reading file notes; understanding policies and procedures; shadowing colleagues.</p> <p>Attendance at Signposts in-house training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with People • Safeguarding <p>Shadowing colleagues to prepare for direct work with clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-one case work • Information and Advice • Group work • Engagement and Community work
Unit 2 Work with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities to help them make informed decisions	<p>One to one work with clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case work including initial assessment; goal planning. • Information and Advice - within main centre and outreach venues. <p>Farming and Rural Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-one work with clients living in isolated rural communities. • Outreach information and advice sessions. • Events and activities. <p>Specific client based work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults and Older People - homelessness; HIV; Help Direct (low level intervention). • Family Support - case work; parenting; • Dad's Work - case work; groups; engagement with Children's Centres. • Young People - Young Carers; Sexual Health; Groups; Youth Cafés.

Unit 3 Assess needs and options to recommend a course of action	<p>All of the above work includes person centred planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To focus on early intervention, based on timely and comprehensive assessment of the client's needs • To improve access to services. • To promote physical health, mental health and emotional well-being by encouraging the development of healthier lifestyles. • To provide practical support and advice. • To demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities; recognising the disadvantages faced by vulnerable people living in the community. • To be innovative and creative in meeting identified need. • To work within good safeguarding practice which protects children and adults, and staff and volunteers who have responsibility for them.
Key Role 2	
Unit 4 Respond to crisis situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and prioritising need within Information and Advice Centres and case work. • Working with colleagues as part of internal Case Review meetings to agree actions.
Unit 5 Interact with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities to achieve change and development and to improve life opportunities	<p>One to one work with clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case work including initial assessment; goal planning. • Information and Advice - within main centre and outreach venues. <p>Farming and Rural Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-to-one work with clients living in isolated rural communities. • Outreach information and advice sessions. • Events and activities. <p>Specific client based work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults and Older People - homelessness; HIV; Help Direct (low level intervention). • Family Support - case work; parenting; • Dad's Work - case work; groups; engagement with Children's Centres. • Young People - Young Carers; Sexual Health; Groups; Youth Cafés.

<p>Unit 6 Prepare, produce, implement and evaluate plans with individuals, families, carers, groups, communities and professional colleagues</p>	<p>Case work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on early intervention, based on timely and comprehensive assessment of the client's needs • Improving access to services. • Promoting physical health, mental health and emotional well-being by encouraging the development of healthier lifestyles. • Providing practical support and advice. • Demonstrating a commitment to equal opportunities; recognising the disadvantages faced by vulnerable people living in the community. • Being innovative and creative in meeting identified need. • Working within good safeguarding practice which protects children and adults, and staff and volunteers who have responsibility for them. <p>Attending events and activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with communities and partners to engage with communities in a n innovative way. • Engagement with Seldom Heard Voices. <p>Group Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue based work - gender specific; young people; homelessness. • Engagement with Seldom Heard Voices.
<p>Unit 7 Support the development of networks to meet assessed needs and planned outcomes</p>	<p>Multi agency working including referrals and signposting.</p>
<p>Unit 8 Work with groups to promote individual growth, development and independence</p>	<p>Group Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue based work - gender specific; young people; homelessness. • Engagement with Seldom Heard Voices.

Unit 9 Address behaviour which presents a risk to individuals, families, carers, groups and communities	Individual needs assessed as part of day to day work with clients including attending formal case reviews.
Key Role 3	
Unit 10 Advocate with, and on behalf of, individuals, families, carers, groups and communities	<p>Undertaking advocacy at a variety of levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting an organisation, individual or agency on client's behalf and representing the client's issue e.g contacting utility firm to negotiate payment scheme where client feels their particular needs are not being taken into account. This would also include working with clients who have literacy needs to write a letter to an organisation or agency. • Referral to an organisation or agency on client's behalf and attending first appointment with client to represent their issues and to ensure their needs are expressed. • Negotiating on client's behalf where there is a legal intervention from an organisation or agency. This includes supporting clients to request reviews (e.g. Local Authority homeless decisions), attending case conferences and negotiating repayments for low level debt. • Referral to appropriate specialist services where the client requires legal advice or representation (e.g Shelter and CAB) and supporting client during appointments, if required.

<p>Unit 11 Prepare for, and participate in decision making forums</p>	<p>Attendance at multi agency meetings and forums.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAC (Team around the Child) meetings. • Internal case review meetings. • Issue based multi agency meetings (e.g. Financial Inclusion groups) <p>Working with individual clients to prepare and plan for meetings.</p> <p>Working with community groups to feedback to services via consultation; information and engagement.</p> <p>Participating in internal case reviews ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is within Signposts policies and procedures. • Clients have been referred appropriately and the work is relevant to the project's aims and objectives. • Appropriate referrals are made to other agencies. • Information about good practice of other services and Signposts work is shared. • Information about other agencies that could provide a service to the clients is shared and explored. • Safeguarding issues are noted and dealt with via Signposts Confidentiality Policy if necessary.
<p>Key Role 4</p>	
<p>Unit 12 Assess and manage risks to individuals, families, carers, groups and communities</p>	<p>Individual needs assessed as part of case work with clients and assessing on-going risk as part of drop-in services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and drug misuse. • Homelessness. • Domestic Violence. • Sexual Health. • Safeguarding.
<p>Unit 13 Assess, minimise and manage risk to self and colleagues</p>	<p>Working within organisation's policies and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone working policy and procedures • Risk assessments with individuals and groups. • Risk assessment at point of initial assessment • On-going risk assessment as part of work with individuals understanding changes in circumstances and situations.

Key Role 5	
Unit 14 Manage and be accountable for your own work	<p>Managing own work timetable including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work within TOIL (time off in lieu) system. • Submitting location. • Prioritising work load alongside Practice Educator.
Unit 15 Contribute to the management of resources and services	<p>Monitoring and recording enquiries.</p> <p>Attending team meetings.</p>
Unit 16 Manage, present and share records and reports	<p>Carrying out monitoring; recording and report writing through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic database. • Monitoring files.
Unit 17 Work within multi-disciplinary and multi-organisational teams, networks and systems	<p>Attending team meetings and training.</p> <p>Working within different teams in the organisation including paid staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Attendance at multi agency meetings and forums.</p>
Key Role 6	
Unit 18 Research, analyse, evaluate, and use current knowledge of best social work practice	<p>Opportunities to research information relating to the projects allocated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and participation. • Seldom heard voices/hard to reach groups. • Current social policy • Methods and interventions
Unit 19 Work within agreed standards of social work practice and ensure own professional development	<p>Working with Practice Educator to ensure effective weekly supervision by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify training needs. • Identify issues and concerns. • Agree and carry out action plans. • Identifying where key roles are being met. • Linking theory and social policy to practice. <p>Report writing and management of case files.</p>
Unit 20 Manage complex ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts	<p>Working with Practice Educator as part of supervision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify issues. • Explore own values and beliefs • Identify appropriate intervention when dealing with complex issues.

<p>Unit 21</p> <p>Contribute to the promotion of best social work practice</p>	<p>Working with Practice Educator during weekly supervision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify best Social Work Practice.• Explore values and beliefs and linking to GSCC value requirements.• Agree and carry out action plans. <p>Contribution to team meetings and in-house training.</p>
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Appendix B - Community Profiling



On this page we suggest some basic and quick steps you can take to gather information about a particular neighbourhood in Britain or Northern Ireland.

The best and easiest starting point with regard to data about the community you are interested in profiling is the web. Most of the basic statistics and background you need can be obtained by a few keystrokes (hopefully!). Below we set out the first steps you need to take. From there we go on to look at the sort of paper information that might be available in your local library and via local agencies.

For a quick statistical profile

For quick and easy profiling of the neighbourhood or community go to [UpMyStreet](http://www.upmystreet.com) (www.upmystreet.com). To access the database you will need to provide a postcode from within the area (it will recognize town names as well). You will then be able to review details concerning:

- house prices
- the performance of local schools
- local councillors and political representatives
- council departments and performance
- raw population numbers and unemployment
- Acorn profile (Acorn is a way of categorizing local neighbourhoods using demographic data, socio-economic profile, housing types, leisure usage etc. It is rather blunt instrument - but does at least provide an overview).
- policing and crime
- local public transport

One of the useful features is the ability to compare one area with another.

The [Office for National Statistics](http://www.ons.gov.uk) neighbourhood statistics site provides a range of information - often on a ward basis for England and Wales. Enter the postcode in the Neighbourhood Summary box. The main headings are:

- People - detailing the make-up of the local population.
- Health - including material on long-term illness and the numbers of people providing unpaid care.
- Work - with details of occupations and local labour market statistics.
- Education - basically local attainment levels.
- Housing - including details of dwellings by tenure and housing conditions (for many areas this will be at a local authority level).

- Crime - a breakdown of recorded crime etc. (but may cover a wide area. Instead use CrimeMapper - see below).
- Environment - which includes land use, fire statistics and domestic energy consumption.

Some of it dates back to the last census, but a significant amount comes from up to date data sources.

For Scotland go to [Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics](#) and put the post code in the quick profile box.

More detail - the census

The next step in profiling your community is to access data for the neighbourhood from the [2001 Census](#) (England and Wales)

(<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/default.asp>). You can get local area statistics (often based on wards or a similar size area) by going to [neighbourhood statistics](#) and entering the post code (in the left hand box "Find statistics for an area"). This will bring up a map of the area covered and detailed statistics concerning, for example:

- demographic make-up (including ethnic description)
- health and care
- economic activity
- housing and households

Figures are compared with the overall figures in your borough/council area and the national average. You can also access up-to-date figures on employment from Nomis (<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>).

Scottish figures can be obtained from [Scotland's Census](#) (<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/grosweb/grosweb.nsf/pages/censushm>), more local figures from Scroll (<http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/common/home.jsp>). Northern Ireland's census results can be searched according to postcode from the frontpage of the be found on the [NISRA](#) site (<http://www.nisra.gov.uk>).

Local authority data and information

You can access your local authority website via UpMyStreet (see above) or via the [Directgov gateway](#) (<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm>). You will be able to examine different aspects of the council's work such as housing, social services, planning, education and so on. You can also usually search the site for information about particular areas and examine the minutes of different committees. They may even have produced profiles of different communities/neighbourhoods.

Some things worth typing in include the name of the area plus:

- plan
- topic paper
- education
- and so

From the Directgov gateway it is also worth trying the powerful [advanced search](#) option. You can search over 2000 government sites (and 1.5 million documents). This will access your local authority databases as well as central government sites concerning the area.

Crime statistics

It is now possible to get information on crime and antisocial behaviour on neighbourhoods in England or Wales via [CrimeMapper](#). You can search by village, town or postcode. In Scotland you need to go to the [Scottish Government Crime and Justice Statistics](#) for the overall situation.

Pictures of your neighbourhood

For a view from the air go to [Google maps](#) (<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps>), enter the place or postcode and then press 'satellite' in the map/image area. Zoom to the view you require.

For pictures of the area a search on [Flickr](#) (www.flickr.com), the photo-share site, can often yield interesting results.

Housing

Take a look at the property sites such as [rightmove.co.uk](#). This gives a good idea of the non-social housing rental market and sales. You can get recent housing prices from [nethouseprices.com](#).

Transport

One way into different sources is via the BBC site (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/home/d/>)- just type a postcode into the [Where I Live](#) page - and see what comes up.

Other searches

Now it is time to go to [Google](#) (still the best search engine) or [Bing](#). A good alternative is the metasearch engine [ixquick.com](#) (which searches Yahoo, MSN, AlttheWeb plus a number of other engines). It also has the advantage of being the only main engine, so it claims, to delete your personal data.

The secret with searching is to include some qualifying words e.g. Bermondsey+history, Rotherhithe+health. This should pick up some useful material. For hints on Google searching go to [the essentials of Google search](#) ; and for Ixquick check out their '[search like a pro](#)'.

Your local library and agencies in the area

Much of the material available on the web might well be found in a good local library. What they will also have pre-internet material - and this can provide information that helps make sense of current developments and issues.

An often invaluable resource is the reports and materials held by other agencies. Frequently, they will be in a pretty unorganized state, but ploughing through what has been chucked in a box file or document box can sometimes yield gems.

Further reading

Hawtin, M., Hughes, G. and Percy Smith, J. (2007) *Community Profiling. A practical guide.* (Revised edition) Maidenhead: Open University Press. 256 pages. Practical guide with an annotated bibliography detailing UK examples of community profiles.

Chapters on the nature of community profiles; planning; involving the community; making use of existing information; collecting new information; survey methods; storing and analysing information; collating and presenting information; using your findings.

Acknowledgements: The picture of Gibson Gardens, Stoke Newington is by Fin Fahey and is reproduced here under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0

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infed is a not-for-profit site

Appendix C - Supervision Guidelines

1. Supervision will take place once a week for one hour either as a group or individual.
2. Supervision will be carried out by the Practice Educator or in their absence an appropriate member of the team.
3. The session will be booked each week in advance and an appropriate space offering confidentiality organised.
4. The content of supervision will be shared with appropriate line managers, Signposts management team or university tutor within confidentiality processes and in agreement with student and Practice Educator where appropriate.
5. Each session will identify tasks achieved from previous session and will identify further tasks for the following week
6. The Practice Educator and student should be prepared for each session by:
 - Ensuring tasks from previous session are completed
 - Any issues or concerns are raised
 - Questions and observations about the placement are explored
7. The Practice Educator and student will undertake to ensure that they are not interrupted during the supervision sessions (i.e. all phones off and request to other team members not to interrupt session).
8. Cancelled sessions must be re-booked at the time of cancellation.
9. Students are expected to take supervision notes using the UCLAN template(www.uclan.ac.uk/health/studying_in_foh/plsu/subject_disciplines/social_work/templates.php) but this can be negotiated on an individual basis.
10. Supervision notes should be sent to Practice Educator via email, in advance of the next session. A final version will be agreed prior to the next supervision session should any discrepancies be apparent.
11. Notes from supervision will be kept electronically by Practice Educator and all paper copies shredded.

Appendix D - Placement Evaluation

This exercise can be done as a peer group supervision session or individually.

Please complete the questionnaire and hand it to your Practice Educator at the end of the placement.

Placement Dates:

1st or 2nd Placement:

University:

Induction

What went well?

Why?

What can be improved?

How?

Learning Opportunities

What went well?

Why?

What can be improved?

How?

Supervision

What went well?

Why?

What can be improved?

How?

<p>Observed practice</p> <p>What went well?</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>What can be improved?</p> <p>How?</p>
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<p>Overall</p> <p>What went well?</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>What can be improved?</p> <p>How?</p>
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Appendix E – Casework Processes on Procedure

Casework Processes and Procedure (Including: new referrals and case reviews)

The following is a step by step guide to the casework processes and procedures at Signposts. All of our venues and projects will follow the same procedures.

New Referrals:

- Referral forms are available from the website.
- All referrals are received at Main Office (Signposts, Regent Road, Morecambe, LA3 1TE. Tel: 01524 419021.) Cases recorded on referral sheet by administration team.
- Admin team then contact referrer to inform them that referral has been received. Case work 'opening checklist' to be completed and forward with referral form via email to SMT (Strategic Management Team) member responsible for referral allocation.
- Original referral and checklist to be filed at Main office in case work filing cabinet.
- The client will be contacted where possible within 48 hours of receipt of referral, by SMT member. Where a case worker is on leave or absent the client will be informed of the nearest possible date they will be contacted to arrange a home visit.
- Any urgent issues identified when contacting the client will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the SMT member who contacts the client.
- In all cases where support is not able to take place, information about other agencies/alternative support will be given to the client and referrals made if appropriate.
- SMT member will allocate cases to appropriate project leads, complete 'opening case checklist' and forward information to project leads and admin team along with referral form.
- Project lead to allocate to appropriate worker (please note where cases are allocated to students this must be done via the practice assessor and not directly to the student), complete the 'opening case checklist' and forward to case worker and admin team.

N.B. the referral process cover sheet must be completed at each stage and emailed to the next person in the process. Once complete email to Project Support Worker to attach to referral form.

N.B. where a referral form has not been signed please take out the scanned copy and get this signed and then attach to original form.

New cases:

Once new cases have been assigned, workers ring to arrange an initial visit. Workers are responsible for adding client details to the database and ensuring this is kept up to date with all contacts, home visits and enquiries.

Initial visit paperwork:

The following must be taken on an initial visit;

- Common assessment form (see website or database)
- Risk assessment (see website or database)
- Goal-planning sheet (see website)
- Teen Star Outcome Tool - set baseline for Young Person

After initial visit:

- Common assessment form and risk assessment are uploaded onto the database and then shredded.
- In all cases where support is not able to take place, information about other agencies/alternative support will be given to the client and referrals made if appropriate.
- Letter sent to referrer, health visitor (where appropriate) and Children's Centre (where appropriate) outlining support to be put in place (see website)
- Ring Health Visitor to let them know we are working with the family (where there is an under 5 in the family, even if you are not directly working with the under 5).
- A copy of the Goal planning sheet should be made available to the client.
- Completed referral process form to be emailed to admin team.

6 week plan of support:

- Using the goal-planning sheet deliver a 6-week focused plan of support.
- Under normal circumstances advice given would not be confirmed in writing. However, where the case worker feels that it would be appropriate a letter outlining discussions taken place during visits, will be sent to the client and recorded on their client's file.
- Clients are kept regularly informed of progress through regular home visits/phone contacts/meetings.
- Keep in regular contact with health visitor, referrer and other professionals throughout the support.
- At the end of the 6-weeks, case is reviewed by Project Lead or SMT member. Students are case reviewed by their practice assessors. If case is to be closed see steps below.

- Cases that require further support need to have new goals set with the client. New goal planning sheets to be sent out to referrer, health visitor (where appropriate), Children's centre (where appropriate), client and a copy kept with the referral form.

Case review process:

A case review is required for each case every 6 weeks to ensure:

- Work is within Signposts policies and procedures.
- Clients have been referred appropriately and the work is relevant to the project's aims and objectives.
- Appropriate referrals are made to other agencies.
- Information about good practice of other services and Signposts work is shared.
- Information about other agencies that could provide a service to the clients is shared and explored.
- Safeguarding issues are noted and dealt with via Signposts Confidentiality Policy if necessary.

Case work review form should be completed and information regarding the following points should be added to the client's database record:

- Actions to be taken.
- Case closure
- No action required

The case review form is then kept centrally within the case work filing cabinet at main office.

Any corrective action that is required must be completed within 28 days and the case reviewer notified. This should then be inputted onto database and the centrally kept records.

Any complex cases where decisions regarding Signposts input should be referred to a member of the Strategic Team or Chief Executive. This may include:

- Safeguarding issues.
- Staff safety.
- Complex needs requiring multi-agency referral.

The data generated from case reviews will be reviewed annually by the Strategic Team in order to identify trends. This information will form part of the Signposts Annual Review.

Closing cases:

- Send letter to client (see website)
- Send letter to referrer (see website)
- Send letter to Children's Centre (see website, same as referrer letter)
- Send letter to Health Visitor (see website, same as referrer letter)
- Email project lead who will then close the case from the database.
- Project Lead to inform admin team that cases are closed and they will update the 'closed case checklist' sheet.

Accessing Closed Cases

If you need to access a closed case for a client that has been re-referred or a referrer is enquiring about the case then the following needs to be done:

- Contact a member of the Strategic Management Team (SMT) to discuss the request for access to the file
- SMT will then access the file for you and give you the details you require.
- If an old case has been re-referred it is always worth checking the closed file for the reason it was closed, however a new case should be opened.

Updated November 2011