

THE TOOLKIT

An electronic version of this toolkit is available at www.criticalpublishing.com/nqswtoolkit.pdf

Fill in the Toolkit as you work your way through the chapters. This is your Toolkit and will be different for everyone; it is a live document and represents your journey through your first year in practice (and beyond). We will make suggestions, prompt your thinking with questions, and encourage you to add your own thoughts and to use this to record evidence of developing capability during your ASYE. Try to include specific examples of practice where possible and report outcomes, and get into the habit of completing the document regularly. The Toolkit can be used as a basis for supervision and discussion around progression and links directly to the PCF. To help you in this please also refer to the *Professional Capabilities Framework – Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Level Capabilities* information which can be found on the BASW website. Remember that the Toolkit is a guide; you do not have to use all of the questions here. You may also like to refer back to the chapters in the book to help you and though there are many overlaps, we have identified the ones which are most applicable to the relevant domain within the PCF below. Remember your ASYE is a year long journey, therefore do not be daunted by this document; it is a tool to help you gather your evidence over the whole year, rather than a ‘must do’ chore.

Remember – the original College of Social Work, now BASW guidance, states that:

by the end of the ASYE social workers should have consistently demonstrated practice in a wider range of tasks and roles, and have become more effective in their interventions, thus building their own confidence, and earning the confidence of others. They will have more experience and skills in relation to a particular setting and user group, and have demonstrated ability to work effectively on more complex situations. They will seek support in supervision appropriately, whilst starting to exercise initiative and evaluate their own practice.

This is what you are aiming for.

Focus your mind and think about why you became a social worker, what you hope to get out of your chosen profession, what motivates you, why did you choose social work, what are your dreams and aspirations for the future? These are the things that will keep you grounded and that you can reflect upon as you go along. Record your thoughts below:

Remember the evidence is all around you, and you may want to include any of the following in your evidence:

- Written work – reports, case notes, assessments, reviews/evaluations, case closures, minutes of meetings, supervision notes, team meeting notes, induction record
- Observations – by your manager/assessor, colleagues
- Feedback – from colleagues in your own team/agency or others, from service users and carers, from other professionals in other disciplines
- Training – records, notes, certificates
- Records of reading – books, websites, journals, articles
- Visits to other agencies or work shadowing
- Evidence of regular reflection on your practice
- Examples from case work, direct work with service users
- Special projects or specific pieces of work
- Supervision notes and exercises, preparation records
- Diary notes and organisation/time management sheets/'to do' lists
- Reading for specific cases or around particular theory, policy and procedure or legislation
- Observations of others' practice
- Joint case working opportunities
- Please add any others you can think of

PCF 1 – Professionalism

Overview: Your ability to evidence your commitment to the social work profession, and your responsibility and accountability in practice, and your ability to work within regulatory guidelines.

Predominant links to Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9

- How do you demonstrate that you are able to meet and maintain the HCPC standards? How are you fulfilling the requirements of the Knowledge and Skills statements? Check the standards and think about how you can demonstrate your compliance. Look at each different standard and think of at least one example that you can record. Some questions to ask may include: How have you recognised and responded when vulnerable people have been at risk, how have you worked with service users in a respectful, open and polite manner, how would you define your professional boundaries, which of your own values impact upon your practice and how do you address this, how do you ensure that your practice is inclusive and that this applies to all service users equally, how do you rate your communication skills – written, verbal and non-verbal, when do you work with others from other teams and disciplines and in what contexts, which records do you keep and when – are these kept up to date, which social work theories and models do you use, are these always appropriate, how do you know, which IT systems are you able to use and what impact does this have on your practice, how do you manage confidentiality in difficult circumstances – eg hot desking, mobile working?
- How do you use supervision? How do you prepare for your meeting, how do you assert your needs, discuss personal and professional issues, reflect on practice, request and accept constructive feedback? How do you include the PCF as a tool to help develop your practice?
- How are you caring for yourself? How do you ensure a good work–life balance, manage your time effectively, understand and maximise your strengths and identify and manage your own vulnerabilities, and develop your emotional resilience? How do you support the well-being of others?
- How are you ensuring professional boundaries are in place? How are you sharing your own personal experiences, history and knowledge, setting appropriate ground rules for yourself and your relationships with service users?
- What personal development goals have you set for yourself – further training courses, shadowing opportunities, supervision discussion, reading, study time?
- Are you able to challenge colleagues and managers? Can you assert yourself, can you challenge poor practice, and are you able to manage relationships with all colleagues, even though some may be difficult?

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- How do you demonstrate your accountability – are your recordings timely and appropriate, can you evidence your decision making, do you accept responsibility for mistakes, are you open to challenge? What are your strategies for managing your time effectively?
 - How are you ensuring that you are presenting yourself as best you can and in the most professional manner – preparation for meetings and observing others chairing, the way you dress, the language you use, your time-keeping and reliability, the relationships you develop with others?
 - How do you contribute to the positive reputation of the profession – how do you interact with colleagues in other teams or services, do you have belief in your convictions, reclaim the professionalism that media often deny, stay positive, motivate and help others believe in social work?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 2 – Values and Ethics

Overview: How your practice is underpinned by sound professional values and ethics and how you understand and apply the relevant legislation in this area of your work.

Predominant links to Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

- How do you ensure that you uphold professional values and ethics – can you identify your own core values, how do your personal and professional values differ, what effect does this have on your work, how does your own personal value base affect the way you work with service users and colleagues, how are you able to reconcile the differences that can exist between professional and service users' values, how do you ensure that you are not imposing your values on others?
 - How do you demonstrate ethical standards in your practice – how do you ensure that ethically sound decisions are made and what is your 'process' for this, how do you manage decisions that challenge your own moral values, how do you include others in this and who might these be, how have you managed ethically difficult situations, can you think of incidents where you have been professionally assertive, what have been the results of this, how did you find this, how have you managed challenge and what part do values and ethics play in this?
 - What part does policy, procedure and legislation play in your seeking to be an ethically sound practitioner, which of these defines your practice, what have you found that has helped or hindered your decision making, in what way?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 3 – Diversity

Overview: Your understanding of how difference shapes the lives of others both individually and collectively and how this can be both positive and negative, and how you are able to effectively challenge when this is required.

Predominant links to Chapters 5, 9

- Think about the service that you work in and about the diversity of the service user group and think about the cases that you have worked with. How have you actively supported individual or family needs in this area, are there any cases which stand out for any particular reason, can you give examples of where service users have been disadvantaged due to their own personal circumstances, background, attitude or value base, what have you done to support them, how have you encountered oppression and supported individuals to reach their potential, in what ways have you advocated on their behalf?
 - Have you worked with service users who have felt that their circumstances or background have been a positive advantage to them, or that they used their circumstances or background to justify their negative actions or reactions to others or to your intervention, can you think of occasions where you have challenged people in this area, what has been the result? Whether positive or negative, what did you learn from this, how have you helped others to see the oppression and opportunity that can arise from their own experiences?
 - How aware of your own personal and professional power do you feel you are, how does this impact upon your work, can you give both negative and positive examples of this, how do you use your power for the benefit of service users, how does your title and role impact on the development of relationships with others, how do you manage this on a day-to-day basis, how do others' perceptions of you (personally and professionally) and your role affect the manner in which you work?
 - How do you ensure that you challenge and do not collude with people, services or organisations which seek to marginalise others, how do you manage situations where thoughts and opinions are at such odds that no compromise can be found and significant risk or high level of need is apparent?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 4 – Rights, Justice and Economic Well-being

Overview: The protection of rights and equality and how these principles underpin your practice and how you use legislation to support this.

Predominant links to Chapters 4, 5, 9

- Which legislation, policy and procedures do you use the most in your role in terms of upholding the rights of service users, how does this legislation assist your role and in what ways have you found that you are constrained by this? Which policies and procedures underpin your practice in this area and how do you apply these in your casework? How do these have a direct benefit (or otherwise) on service users, which other services have you used to assist with this and how has this affected the outcome of your work?
 - How do you ensure that the human rights of your service users are upheld? Which rights do you feel are most violated and why, how do you help service users to understand these rights and how do you support their quest for justice and equality?
 - Can you identify the factors in your work with service users which make them vulnerable to oppression, discrimination and poverty? How do you address issues where many of these factors are present and are inter-generational, how has your work helped to address these issues in the short/medium and long term, how do you empower service users to address these factors for themselves, to move forward and to begin to become independent of support services?
 - How have you assisted service users to access your and other services which will support their development and bring about an improvement in their circumstances? Which services have you used to support this, in what ways do you assist service users to gain an independent voice where necessary and enable them to make informed and positive choices in their lives?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 5 – Knowledge – [link here to the Knowledge and Skills statements](#)

Overview: The knowledge you have developed in different areas including the law, policy and procedure, human development and the influences upon this. Different social work models and theories, and how you use this knowledge in practice.

Predominant links to Chapters 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

- Describe your knowledge base. What knowledge do you need to do your job effectively and where does this come from, how have you used the knowledge gained throughout your time at university to your and the service users' best advantage, do you feel that this effectively equipped you for your role, what areas of knowledge do you use daily, weekly or less often, which specialist areas of knowledge do you use in your current role?
- Which areas of theoretical knowledge do you currently use and how, how have you developed this in practice, what further reading or research have you completed in this area, which areas do you find particularly difficult or challenging, how have you addressed this, are there any theories that you particularly use and apply methodically or habitually, or are there some that you don't – why not? Are you heavily reliant on a few theoretical models, which ones and why? Do you test out different theories, why do you do this?
- What are the most significant policies and procedures that your practice is guided by, how familiar are you with these, how do they shape your work, do you feel that you understand them all fully?
- What legislation does your service work under, how does this impact upon your role as a social worker, which pieces of legislation do you use the most, which pose the most challenge, how do you implement the legislation with service users and ensure their understanding and compliance, what action do you take when legal agreements are breached?
- What social work models do you use when working with service users, are there some that you find work better than others, others that you have yet to try, or some that you find do not work for you – why?
- What new knowledge have you acquired since you qualified, how did this come about and why, how are you using this in your practice, where has this learning come from, what have you learned from reading, supervision, colleagues, service users or others, what do you feel has been your most valuable lesson and why, how do you keep up to date with new developments in social work, what articles, journals, books or magazine articles have you read?

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- Where do you go when you do not know the answer, what happens when you are faced with a situation or question that you do not have an answer for, how do you use others' experience and knowledge to further your own and to benefit the service user, have you identified any gaps in your knowledge in terms of theory, policy and procedure, legislation, what have you done to address this?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 6 – Critical Reflection and Analysis

Overview: Reflection both in and on practice, using a range of different sources of evidence in order to provide analysis and arrive at sound decisions; and also in order to learn and develop.

Predominant links to Chapters 4, 9

- What sources of information, evidence and knowledge do you use in your casework, where does this come from, what emphasis do you put on different pieces of information, from different sources, gained in different ways? How do you decide what is important and what is not, what is fact and what is opinion, what is true and untrue, what methods of analysis do you use, how do you decide on the relevance of information, what impact does your subsequent decision making have on service users and the outcome of your work?
 - How effective are your problem-solving skills, how do you decide on a plan of intervention or action, what factors do you weigh when deciding on which option to take? How and when are you able to demonstrate a flexible approach, how do you know when this is appropriate, how creative are you in working with service users, how far are you able to use hypotheses to test out your initial opinions and how does this shape your work and its outcomes?
 - How do you learn best, how do you put previous learning into practice, how do you reflect on what you have learned, how does this help in your professional development, how does what you do now differ from how you would have done things previously how and why has this come about?
 - How are you using your supervision to reflect upon and analyse your practice, how are you linking intuition and analysis, are you being emotionally intelligible within your practice and decision making?
 - How honest are you able to be with your supervisor and with yourself, can you share your true feelings when things are difficult or you are not coping, are you acknowledging your fears and anxieties?
 - How is your work life balance, are there any difficulties that are impacting your practice?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 7 – Intervention and Skills – *link here to the Knowledge and Skills statements*

Overview: How you form positive relationships and how this enables you to balance rights and responsibilities, need and risk and how you use your skills to intervene and improve lives.

Predominant links to Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

- How effectively can you communicate with service users, which methods do you use regularly or occasionally, how do you demonstrate that you are a good listener, in what way do you use your body language to communicate with others, how do you ensure that others understand what you are communicating, what methods do you employ to enable service users with special needs to understand your message, how do you ensure that you communicate your message clearly and effectively and check that you have been understood? How do you ensure you gain consent from people with communication or learning difficulties?
- How do you build relationships with service users, in what ways do you develop a rapport with them, how do you ensure that they are aware of but not disempowered by your role, how do you ensure that service users are clear about your role and its limitations, how open with them are you in this respect?
- Which methods of social work intervention do you use and why, how do you select your chosen method and how do you know whether it has been effective or not, how do you follow up if things are not going to plan?
- When do you make written records, how and where, which records have you kept and for what purpose, how do you record disagreements with managers, colleagues and service users and ensure that all views are recorded, how do you demonstrate that you know what is opinion and what is fact, how do you ensure that appropriate access to records is maintained and in line with policy and legislation?
- How timely and thorough are your assessments? Which theories underpin your work, how do you manage to work with the service user and provide ongoing support at the same time as continuing a period of assessment, how do you structure your work while remaining flexible and being able to respond to ongoing and newly developed need, what is your understanding of the level of risk that your service users may be facing, how do you assess, respond to and manage risk and need in your cases, how have

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you contributed to plans which ensure the safety and well-being of service users, what strategies have you employed which have reduced the level of risk?

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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 8 – Contexts and Organisations

Overview: How you respond to changing situations and circumstances, and how this enables you to work with others while fulfilling your professional responsibilities.

Predominant links to Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

- How well do you work within your own team, are you a ‘team player’ or do you prefer to work alone, why? Are there times when you ask for support with your cases and are there times when you have been asked to support others in their work, do you always agree with what is being said or proposed or with action taken either on your own cases or on others, are you confident in offering your professional opinion to more experienced colleagues, do you mind others challenging your views and plans?
 - Which other teams do you engage with on a regular basis and in what context, how do you promote multi-agency working, how do you ensure that you have clear roles when working with colleagues from other teams or disciplines, in statutory roles or within the voluntary sector, what do you find the most challenging in this area, have there been any professional disagreements, how have these been resolved, what do you consider the most effective ways in which you have worked together with others, what kinds of communications do you have with other teams and how may this be improved, in what circumstances have you worked to achieve the best outcomes for service users within a multi-agency team, how have you managed the conflict that arises when multi-agency teams have differing roles and agenda and are working under differing legal and policy guidelines?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.

PCF 9 – Professional Leadership – Remember to check that this is the most up to date version of PCF 9 before beginning your work here, see p17

Overview: How you contribute to the profession and to the development of others, and how this enhances the service for all involved.

Predominant links to Chapters 2, 9

- How do you contribute to the development of others, have you been involved in any special or project work or sat on any working party meetings, have any social work students been placed with the team, how did you support their work, have you been involved in any research, how has this been used to develop your own practice or that of others?
 - Which areas of your work contain an element of teaching? This may be with a service user or a parent/carer or with less experienced colleagues. How has your intervention contributed to them learning or improving existing skills, knowledge or experience, what impact has this had on their development or circumstances?
 - Do you regularly attend and contribute to team or site meetings, have you made any presentations to your team, perhaps sharing your knowledge after you've attended a training course, have you raised issues in meetings which required addressing or which have led to improvements or developments in practice, have you challenged any decisions made in this forum, are you confident in speaking in team meetings, have you chaired or taken the minutes, have you engaged in team case discussions, do you become involved in service evaluation as a part of the team?
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- Use this space to add your own examples, evidence, plans, reflection.