A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO

PLACEMENTS IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SETTINGS

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PLACEMENTS IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SETTINGS *From Theory to Practice*

**EDITED BY
SIMON WILLIAMS
AND DIANA CONROY**

Contents

Meet the editors

Simon Williams has over 20 years' experience in youth and community work, and six years' experience in teaching at higher education, during which he has been a placement coordinator, working with both agencies and students to develop the best possible student experience on placement.

Diana Conroy has wide experience of working in well-being, health and social care. She has worked as a social worker and within the NHS. She is Senior Lecturer in Counselling and Psychotherapy, teaching modules on understanding health and social care systems, creativity and meta-awareness and the unconscious.

Meet the authors

Claire Ambrose

Claire Ambrose worked as a Senior Lecturer at University of Derby for 15 years She started her career as a secondary school teacher but has a wide range of experience in leading and managing education projects, health work, and with charities. She worked for six years with Ofsted and for 13 years within the NHS as an Assessor. Her research interests include Family Learning, Social Pedagogy and tackling inequalities.

Sarah Barley-McMullen

Sarah Barley-McMullen has over 35 years of community and youth work experience. Within this time, she has spent 14 years as an academic in this field, and 3 years as the Diversity and Inclusion Lead, both at the University of Derby.

In 2019, Sarah was made Stonewall Role Model of the Year for her culture change work within the University. More recently, as Chair of her hometown LGBT+ Pride community organisation, Sarah has been shortlisted as LGBT+ Community Organisation of the year by the National Diversity Awards.

Throughout her career, reflection on and in practice has been pivotal in enabling challenge, action and change to take place within her work.

Tonimarie Benaton

Tonimarie Benaton is a Registered Social Worker and a Senior Lecturer in Social Work in the School of Applied Health, Psychology, and Social Care at Derby University. Tonimarie has over 16 years of experience in the field of Children and Families Social Work including work with Children in Care, Adoption, Training, Education, Independent Visiting, and Independent Reviewing Children in Care. She is currently undertaking her DPrac in Health and Social Care in Social Work and The Assimilation of the Child's Voice. She is actively involved in research relating to Vicarious Trauma of Social Work Students, Post 16 Children in Care, and Children in Care and Creative Interventions.

Claire Connor

Claire Connor has been a social worker for over 15 years. She began her career in the voluntary sector as a practitioner and manager within the field of child sexual exploitation (CSE). She developed innovative programmes to support young people affected by CSE including the experiences of young men and boys. Claire took her

social work experience into education. She worked on several programmes as a lecturer and also authored safeguarding and professional practice modules at the University of Derby. Claire now works for the NHS as a CAMHS Mental Health Practitioner. She continues to lecture alongside providing supervision for social work students as a Practice Educator. She also teaches Pilates within a Derby based wellbeing centre which she manages.

Nigel Down

Nigel Down had experience of working in the field of Youth and Community Development Work for over 30 years before moving to teach at the University of Derby. Nigel's professional practice experience has been mainly with both local authority services for children and young people, and with voluntary sector community organisations. Throughout his Youth Work practice, he was mainly involved in working with 'hard to reach' groups and with young people displaying challenging behaviour. He worked as a senior service manager for 13 years, having responsibility for workforce training and development within his management portfolio. Nigel graduated from the University of Derby in 1995.

Liz Eate

As a registered adult general nurse, Specialist Community Public Health Nurse and specialist in teenage pregnancy, Liz is currently Interim Discipline Lead for Social and Community Studies at the University of Derby. Her research interests include the language of joint serious case and domestic homicide reviews; interprofessional working in child protection and safeguarding and the experiences of students and practitioners who work with children and/or families; the use of technology to enhance the learning of students in the health and social care arena; diversifying the curriculum; and interprofessional learning for undergraduates not only in health and social care but drawing in other colleges and programmes too.

Valerie Fletcher

Valerie works is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Health at Leeds Beckett University, where she is Post Graduate Diploma Course Leader, supervises dissertations and teaches on the MA Integrative Psychotherapy courses and is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA), enjoying helping students to learn and flourish into successful professional practitioners. Valerie also runs a private practice as an Accredited (BACP) Counsellor / Psychotherapist, specialising in working with Trauma, Abuse, Bereavement, Mental Health Diagnoses, Depression and Anxiety. Alongside her successful Private Practice, she is working as a Psychological Therapist/ Counsellor within the NHS, has previously worked as a Nurse and within Prison and School settings. Valerie is undertaking research into resilience amongst mental health and counselling students, the evidence base behind therapies for depression, inclusivity and decolonisation of services and supporting students working with clients with a personality disorder diagnosis.

Fran Fuller

Fran Fuller is Interim Head of School for Allied Health & Social Care, a registered social worker and is currently researching Child Protection and Interprofessional Learning (Ed D).

Fran has been an academic for nearly 20 years and prior to this was a training officer and child protection officer. Fran was a member of the British Association of Social Workers and was Chair of BASW UK for 5 years (2010). Currently, Fran is Chair of the Professional Development Committee.

Zuzia Goddard

Zuzia Goddard is a qualified and registered social worker as well as being a qualified Practice Educator. She has over 25 years' experience within the health and social care field. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and holds a Master of Education from the University of Derby. Her interests are in Safeguarding Adults with a focus on substance use and misuse.

Pauline Green

Pauline Green is a former course director and academic lead in Social Work and Social Care, University of Derby where she worked between 1999 and 2021. She is a registered social worker, qualifying in 1984 and worked in a wide range of statutory settings in both children and adult services.

John Hills

John Hills is a senior lecturer at Leeds Beckett University and leads on the MA Integrative Counselling course, which is a route to professional qualification. He is a BACP accredited pluralistic therapist in private practice with particular theoretical interest in Existentialism and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. His PhD centres upon the meanings and patterns of therapeutic change, and this is an ongoing interest. John is currently researching into the social determinants of mental health and their implications for the work of counselling and psychotherapy.

Tim Howell

Tim Howell is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Allied Health and Social Care at the University of Derby. He has extensive experience in formal and informal education, for over twenty years, as a youth and community worker, teacher, trainer, lecturer and outdoor education practitioner. His areas of interest are social media, challenging behaviour, sexual health, management, outdoor education and inter-professional learning.

Gavin Jinks

Gavin has been a qualified social worker since 1990. He had wide ranging experience across the adult service spectrum before moving into Learning and Development with Derby City Council. He played a key role in creating and delivering a training course for Practice Educators while working for Derby City. He qualified as a counsellor in 2001 and has worked as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Derby since 2012. Gavin has written and presented at a significant number of national and international conferences on issues relating to student engagement. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and has won awards at the University of Derby for his work on creative teaching, student mentoring and student engagement.

Jackie King-Owen

Jackie King-Owen has been a qualified social worker since 1979 and an independent practice educator since 1983. She has worked mainly in the charitable and voluntary sector running a housing with care organisation for 25 years and employing 650 staff including 12 social workers. She set up an in-house social work training unit (known as PEPE) which offered placements to over 50 students. Following early retirement in 2015, Jackie joined the University of Derby as an associate lecturer, then a lecturer in Child, Family, Health and Wellbeing, completing her PGCE in 2019. She is currently a part time staff tutor at the Open University, leading on the social work degree courses in the Midlands region and service user involvement strategy for the OU in England. She is a doctoral researcher in health and social care and a helpline volunteer, supervisor and paid trainer for Cruse Bereavement Care. Her three adult children are all qualified social workers too!

Jodie Low

Jodie is a Director of Free 2 Talk CIC delivering Youth Work; Parenting and Counselling with disadvantaged communities in Northamptonshire. Her role in the organisation is in operational leadership and funding and resourcing. She is a Senior Lecturer for University of Northampton, teaching on MA in Youth & Community Leadership with JNC; BA in Social Care and Community Practice and the Fdn in Health & Social Care. Prior to this she worked as a Senior Lecturer at Derby University's Department of Health and Social Care; module leading on Youth Work, Protecting and Safeguarding Children and Professional Practice. Before joining the University of Derby in 2012, Jodie led training for Northamptonshire County Council and delivered lectures and placement supervision for the University of Northampton. Jodie's research experience has utilised a range of methods, and her research focus currently is on youth violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding. She is JNC Qualified Youth & Community Worker, has an MA in Community Education and a BSc in Psychology. She is a HEA Fellow with Postgraduate Diploma in teaching at Higher Education.

Tom Matthews

Tom Matthews is a lecturer within the Psychological Therapies and Mental Health subject group at Leeds Beckett University. Tom combines lecturing with working as a Clinical Psychologist in the NHS, third and private sectors. Tom's work as a Clinical Psychologist has predominantly been with young people and families, working in ways which support them around their psychological wellbeing within both generic and specialist NHS child and adolescent mental health teams. His interest and experience in systemic thinking is rooted in this work, and underpinned his involvement in the chapter within this book. Tom has supervised students and trainees from disciplines whilst on placement, increasingly utilising digital technology to do so during the recent Covid outbreak. He therefore writes from the position of educator, supervisor and clinician.

Helen Morgan

Helen Morgan is Programme Lead and admissions tutor for the BA (Hons) Health and Social Care. She has been at the university since 2015; prior to that she worked in FE

and prior to that as a Registered General Nurse in critical care. She is also a qualified Operating Department Practitioner. As part of her nursing career, she spent time working with residential care homes and nursing homes to both train staff and develop staff to deliver the highest possible care to service users and patients. She is passionate about teaching and feels that her broad experience has led her to develop skills in many areas and she can bring these to the classroom. As well as the University of Derby she worked at the University of Bradford and developed a Foundation Degree in Dementia Studies.

Tim Rosier

Tim is a Senior Lecturer in Social & Community Studies at the University of Derby. As well as teaching and module leadership, he has responsibility for Youth Work & Community Development placements within the discipline. Prior to academia, he had a varied career in the Criminal Justice System working as a Probation Officer, a specialist in the counter-radicalisation arena and as a senior project manager for a faith-based VCSE working with juvenile and young offenders in custody. His research interests include youth work and youth justice, evidence-based youthwork practice, professional identity formation, chaplaincy work with young people, faith-based community work, and desistance from crime. Tim is on the Council of the Institute for Youth Work and an Associate Member of the Alliance for Youth Justice.

Vita Snowdon

Vita was a family carer for over 11 years and, alongside that role, set up a successful, innovative, social enterprise for family carers in a local community; the model that was developed recognised how important peer support and community activities are to the wellbeing and rights of family carers. She is currently undertaking a PhD that explores community activities for family carers under the Care Act 2014. Vita has extensive experience working as a practitioner, a manager, and an entrepreneur within third sector organisations. She is a qualified social worker and Practice Educator, having provided numerous placements for students within her Social Enterprise. She currently works for the University of Derby lecturing within the undergraduate and postgraduate social work programmes.

Ben Wyke

Ben's background in social care and education covers over 35 years. Voluntary work in a day centre led to a development post with Derby Mind and then a post with Derbyshire County Council as a Community Living Instructor for people with a learning disability. Ben went on to spend 20 years in community based mental health services in Derby as a Support Worker, Social Worker, Approved Social Worker and Community Mental Health Team Manager subsequently becoming Senior lecturer and latterly Programme Leader for the Social Work Degree at the University of Derby, until 2020. As a practitioner Ben supported students as a practice educator and then taught on the practice learning module at university whilst also tutoring students on placement. Ben currently works part time for the Care Quality Commission as a Mental Health Act Reviewer a role he has held since 2007.

Introduction

Placements are a period in a student's studies that are often full of excitement and anxiety in equal measure; they can be the place where students are able to excel and evidence how effective they are in their practice, but at the same time students are fully aware of being evaluated as part of this, and the complications this can bring. We remember our own time as students – thinking about placement and the opportunities it could provide, and wanting to prove to ourselves to those we were working with, so we could demonstrate competence and that we knew what we were doing. We were also both mature students and came to studies from practice, so of course we knew what we were doing! Once we started our first placements, we soon realised that we knew so little and had so much to learn; it was a humbling experience!

Placements are much more than just the student and there are three main parties involved: first is the student, second is the organisation and third is the university itself. These three aspects form a partnership that seeks to provide a space for students to excel, explore and create new knowledge. Simon had the experience of existing in all three areas – student, organisation and university – and as such been able to see how things are mirrored across parties. For example, when he hosted students on placement, he remembers 'spring cleaning' – tidying the office, making sure our policies were refreshed, even if they were good for another year, making sure he was super organised – why? Because he was both excited and anxious at the same time. We would think the same questions as students – what if they don't like me? What if they complain about me to the university? What if I look like I don't know what I'm doing? So often we were mirroring the thoughts, emotions and experiences of the student as a supervisor! But as practitioners, we both loved hosting placements; it was a huge benefit to us as professionals, but also for our organisation. Not only did students bring themselves and were an 'extra pair of hands', but more so they brought the latest research and theory and their critical minds; we were able to engage in debate about what we did and why, helping make sense of practice and enabling critical reflection.

Simon remembers working with one student in their final year of study; they were a confident student, and they had worked well together for several weeks. Simon had organised a trip for some local young people to visit the local police station, meet and greet officers, see the holding cells and try on the uniforms, to help build some bridges between the young people and the local police force. The student took him to task and challenged him about this project; they engaged in discussion, and Simon learned about the student's own personal experience with the police. Through this, they were able to make the event better,

making sure the police were involved in learning – just as much as the young people. The event was improved, thanks to that student.

When working at the university organising placements, we were always thrilled to hear feedback and what was happening across the field. Students were and are having a huge impact across the health and social care sector, not just in terms of delivery, but also in organisational development. Every year there is a list of the positive changes students have made to the organisations locally and nationally. Therefore, it is not surprising why we are both passionate about placements and seek to provide support for students undertaking them.

Placement is a huge learning opportunity for all parties involved, but, as already said, can equally be filled with anxiety and uncertainty. As academics, we argue that the theory we teach is to support our profession; theory helps us make sense of and react to situations; theory helps us develop and respond to need; theory helps us question the why and the how, giving understanding and context. As lecturers we encourage students to drive into the theory and wrestle with the concepts to develop a critical thinking which they can apply to practice. And this ideology is what has led to this book. So often students can feel theory is detached from their practice. They learn about theory in the classroom, look at models and quotes and maybe even apply it to a case study, but when you encounter real lives on placement, it can seem like theory flies out the window. We have therefore designed this book so that students can reflect on and experience the real connection between theory and practice.

We have asked for a range of authors with lots of different experiences, many of whom hosted students on placements, and most are involved in teaching placement modules or organising placement arrangements. We hope that this collective pool of knowledge will provide a wide and varied aspect to the theory presented and the approach of the book. We recognise that different professions use different languages for certain aspects, and throughout the book authors have used the terminologies that best suit their professions. We hope this enables readers of this book to see and explore the wider aspects of placement and study in the health and social care sector.

The book has been designed in three parts. The first section looks at the preparation needed before placement, how students can apply the theory to ready themselves for the practice they will face and make sure they are equipped to deal with some of the common issues with placement. The second part of the book deals with being on placement and the issues that can present themselves while undertaking the placement. The third section looks at aspects that might be for students in their final year, or students who are trying to stretch themselves as part of their experience. Throughout the book we have shared the chapters with real-life students and asked them to provide 'hacks' – key bits of advice – to our readers. Throughout the chapters you will find these 'student hacks' in boxes and we hope that this will help our readers be more confident on their placement.

The book has 13 chapters and starts with Chapter 1 on preparation for placement. This chapter helps students to develop a 'placement mindset'; it explores how students can prepare themselves, emotionally, physically and theoretically, so they are ready to engage in the placement experience. Chapter 2 has a detailed look at reflection, arguing that

reflection is key to students learning about themselves and their work, exploring the different approaches to reflection that students can adopt on placement. Chapter 3 follows with a discussion on emotional resilience and looks at the theory that will help students develop resilience to work with people in the wider contexts of their lives. Chapter 4 concludes the first section looking at anti-oppressive practice, including key theories that help students be prepared to recognise and challenge oppressive behaviour, building on previous chapters so that students can reflect on and explore their own bias.

The second section of the book starts with Chapter 5 which looks at the wider context of working with an agency; it explores the theories that student will need to be able to work within the mechanisms of an organisation and recognises some of the challenges of being a student on placement. Chapter 6 expands on this to look at working in challenging settings. Placements will often encounter difficult and ethical situations and this chapter explores the theory to support students to engage in difficult situations such as whistleblowing. Chapter 7 continues to support students through theory to respond to managing the relationship between student and their supervisor; this chapter helps students explore the theory of effective supervision and power dynamics that are involved. Chapter 8 explores the role and impact of technology on placement; it wrestles with the theory of digital literacy in a people-orientated business and how digital tools could support a student's practice. The section finishes with Chapter 9 which explores the theory of and use of self; how students can recognise their strengths and areas for development and use their personality attributes in practice.

The final section of the book starts with Chapter 10 which explores the theory behind interprofessional working and how this is a common concept, but often misunderstood. The chapter helps students apply theory to be able to work well with other agencies and individuals. Chapter 11 explores theoretically how students can involve others, looking at how we gain meaningful feedback to explore and develop our practice. Chapter 12 examines managing projects; how theory can support student skills of negotiation and planning as well as dissemination of information. Finally, this section, and the book, finishes with Chapter 13 which explores measuring our impact. This chapter encourages students to explore the frameworks that affect how we measure impact and what are effective ways of developing this.

We hope that this book is a resource which supports you as students on your journey through studies and placement. We also hope this book is useful to those who host students on placement to support the theoretical development of both parties. Students in health and social settings make a huge difference in the lives of individuals and groups, in training and as qualified and graduated professionals. We wish you all the best in your studies, placements and future career.

Simon Williams and Diana Conroy