

# Practice learning in the voluntary sector:

A guide for voluntary sector practice assessors





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# One

## Introduction



# 1 Introduction

## Skills for Care (SfC)

Skills For Care (SfC) is the Sector Skills Training Council responsible for the strategic development of the adult social care workforce in England. The organisation operates at the national and regional level. The London region is broken down into five sub-regions, each of which works to deliver the SfC agenda to local employers.

The London sub regional areas are:

- South East London
- South West London
- North Central London
- North West London
- North East London

The SfC key objectives for 2007/08 include:

- Employer engagement
- Involving people who use services
- National minimum dataset - social care
- Management and leadership development
- Developing an NVQ Assessor network
- Establishing the new Post Qualifying Training framework for social workers
- Increasing the quality, quantity and range of practice learning opportunities for social work students
- Development of the LeaRNS project

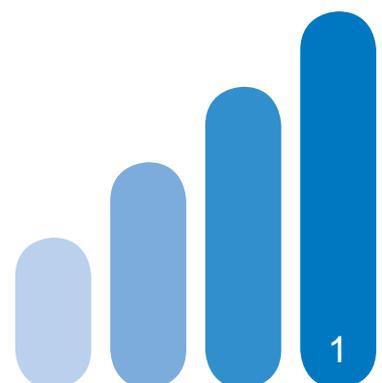
## SfC Practice Learning Objectives

The need to improve the quality, quantity and range of practice learning opportunities (placements) for social work students is a national priority. It is acutely felt in London because of the high number of social work programmes and rapid turn over of social workers in the region. There is a particular need to increase the number of practice learning opportunities in the statutory sector and to improve the range and quality of practice learning in the voluntary sector.

Over the last three years SfC London Region has responded to this by identifying and developing voluntary organisations as placement agencies. It has also undertaken work to establish placements in a range of new settings including health and multi disciplinary teams. This work was initially undertaken through the Learning Resource Network (LRN), a SfC national project. Building on the work of the LRN, SfC now delivers this work directly through the sub regional structure.

## SfC achievements in the voluntary sector

In the different sub regions of London SfC has a developed partnership network with local Councils for Voluntary Services (CVS) and other organisations to inform them of the benefits of working with social work students. Organisations have also been supported through training and consultation to work with students. Organisations have responded to this and the number of placements they provide has increased. A new range of voluntary sector organisations are now involved. In North East London in 2006/07 over 70 new voluntary sector practice learning opportunities were developed by SfC.



## The aims of this resource pack

This pack was developed to help organisations continue to improve the quality of placements for students. It is written for on-site and off-site practice assessors of students based in voluntary sector organisations. The suggested activities and discussions are intended to help assessors give students more of an understanding of the voluntary sector.

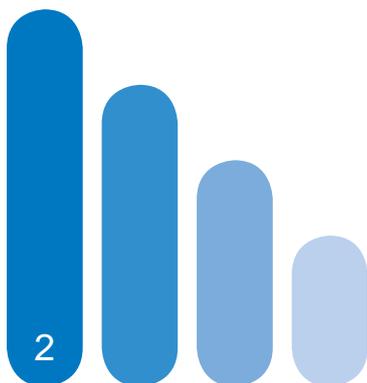
The aims of this pack are to:

- Help plan the placement by suggesting activities that can be carried out, eg. as part of an induction for students
- Help structure, support and enhance learning and practice by giving topics for ongoing reflective discussion
- Extend student learning and help them meet the competencies by suggesting activities that get them thinking about the theories underpinning their work and how these relate to social work practice
- Highlight further resources and activities by using quotes and referencing other useful information.

Some students may at first be reluctant to be placed in a voluntary sector organisation as they do not understand how the work relates to that of statutory social workers. We hope this pack provides evidence of the vast learning available in the sector. This pack will also help practice assessors address the concerns or misconceptions of students early on in the placement.

It is essential that students are given the opportunity to understand more about the voluntary sector's values and philosophy; how organisations work and are structured; and some of the key concepts that inform how the work is done. They will then be in a position to understand the value of what they can learn through working in a non statutory setting.

This resource pack focuses on relating the theory into practice, as on-site practice assessors in the voluntary sector can experience uncertainty in how they support students in this area. We will highlight the innovative practice in the voluntary sector and enable practitioners and students to better understand how voluntary sector orientated theories are relevant to social work practice. We also hope that the pack will help practitioners understand how their practice is transferable to statutory and other settings.



### Terminology

Throughout the pack we use the term 'voluntary sector'. We include community groups and organisations in our definition. The term 'voluntary sector' is used inter-changeably with the term VCS (voluntary and community sector), which is the government's preferred terminology.

## How the pack is organised

Each section provides background information to help understand the work of the voluntary sector. We suggest this information is given to the student.

We also suggest student learning activities and reflective discussion topics relating to each main topic. The aim is for the student to think about the topic in advance and reflect on what they have read and observed before discussing the issues. Reflective discussions can help everyone involved think more about the work being done, what is good about it and what aspects could be further developed or changed. It is hoped that as well as benefiting the student's learning, the stimulation of these discussions will be enjoyed by practice assessors and other staff.

Each of the working models is followed by a case study and reflective practice questions. These are designed to help the student understand the links between social work and other models of working and to relate theory to practice.

Further guidance and information is given where relevant. The final section provides additional relevant information that a student can be given.

The pack is structured so that it is possible to dip in and out of it as required, or work through it as a full document.

## Continuing Professional Development

SfC has developed a wide range of resources to help social care practitioners with their continuing professional development. Details are on the SfC national and local websites:

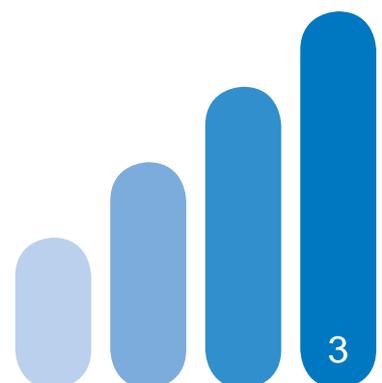
[www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

[www.skillsforcarelondon.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcarelondon.org.uk)

We have also developed a six day practice assessor training programme in North East London that is endorsed by the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). Participants on that programme will also find this resource pack useful. Similarly, off site practice assessors will be able to use this resource pack as the basis for teaching students in the voluntary sector.

Linda Crawford and Ali Rusbridge  
July 2008

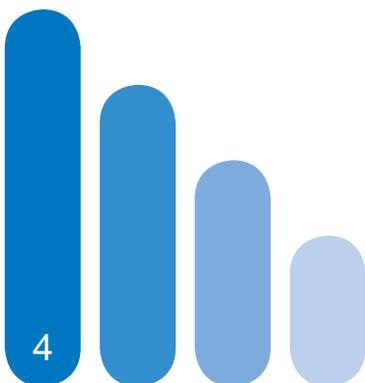
With acknowledgement to the prior workers of Oxford House Plc and CAPITAALS, Molara Solanki and Josephine Ocloo.



### Preparing to have a student:

To prepare for having a student it is useful for practice assessors to consider some of the questions that will be raised in reflective discussions with the student. Suggested things to consider are:

- How would you summarise your approach?
- What methods and theories do you use?
- What are the strengths of your practice?
- What will a student learn about service provision from your agency?
- What are the important values in your work?
- Does your organisation really involve / empower local people and service users?
- What will a student learn about how values inform practice in your agency?



# Two

History and context  
of the voluntary sector



## 2 History and context of the voluntary sector

It is important to be aware of the history of the voluntary sector for a number of reasons:

- To understand why things are the way they are now and how we got to where we are
- To develop a critical perspective of services and organisations
- To evaluate what works and what has not worked in the past
- To recognise what is truly innovative
- To understand the risks and implications of gaps in service provision
- To build better organisations and services in the future

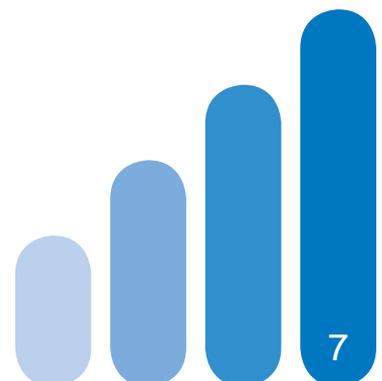
A brief history of the voluntary sector is included in this pack. It shows why the voluntary sector came about and how its role has changed over time. The recent history section is important for understanding the current debates about the relationship between the state and the voluntary sector.

### Student induction activity:

As part of the student's induction it is important that they get to know about both the organisation and the wider voluntary sector.

Give the student a copy of the history of the voluntary sector to read and give them any information available on the history of the organisation and the context of its development

Ask them to consider what the organisation's aims, 'mission' and purpose may have been influenced by when it was developed and what the wider historical and political context at the time was.

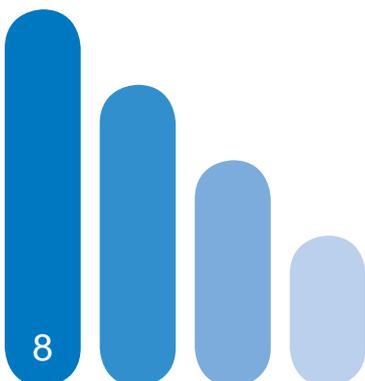


## The history of the voluntary sector

From a historical perspective it is useful to split the development of the voluntary sector into four key phases.

### 1. 1850-1940

- The Industrial Revolution focuses on wealth creation and economic growth
- In parallel with a concern for profit emerges a concern for people
- Philanthropy\* develops – well off and avowedly political individuals such as Shaftsbury, Booth and Beatrice and Sydney Webb form a range of philanthropic institutions – eg. Toynbee Hall, to help the poor
- The settlement movement develops. Several of the 'top' schools and universities form organisations where their students can live and work to learn first hand the problems of disadvantaged areas and provide practical support for the local communities – eg. Oxford House and St Hilda's East, both in the East End
- Mutual Aid\*\* develops, involving ordinary working class people who band together in groups to tackle problems affecting them. Meetings were kept informal and groups set up were friendly societies, co-op stores and building societies such as the Abbey National
- By the end of the nineteenth century philanthropy was in steep decline and the way to tackle social problems was seen as 'statism' not 'voluntarism' – ie. there was growing recognition that it was the role of the state to provide for its citizens
- Fuelled by notions of societal causes of poverty rather than individual behaviour, we see Booth's work on poverty, Durkheim's work on suicide and the publication of 'Das Capital' by Marx
- The great reforming liberal Government of 1905-1914 introduced a programme of social legislation eg. free school meals, a scheme to tax the population to provide comprehensive health, social and pension protection
- A culture of partnership begins to emerge with a mixed economy of provision in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Ideas of 'rights' not 'charity' emerge
- The voluntary sector loses its creativity with more focus on educational and leisure activities than on poverty

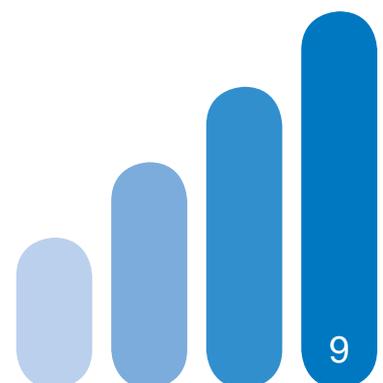


\* Philanthropy  
'Doing good things to help others'  
(Knight, Voluntary Action)

\*\* Mutual Aid  
'Personal gain through collective action' (ibid)

## 2. 1945-1979

- After World War II we see the emergence of the newly elected Labour Government's welfare state. They steer a massive programme of social legislation through parliament, including NHS Act (1946), National Insurance and Industrial Injuries Act (1946), The Children's Act (1948) and the Education Act (1944)
- The focus shifts completely from voluntarism to statism
- In the 1960s a number of factors contribute towards rejuvenating the voluntary sector:
  - o The growing post-war generation makes new demands on public provision and questions the structure of society and how social welfare is provided
  - o The rediscovery of poverty – ie. that it had never really disappeared
  - o Increasing disillusionment with the welfare state and a feeling that it had failed to live up to expectations
  - o Huge increase in independently funded self-help organisations, literature and other publications. This period is seen as the most vibrant era of independent self-help action to date
  - o The emergence of new ideas, of self-help and self determination, eg. that clients should have some control over the delivery of services
- The 1960s and 1970s give rise to a number of self-help groups that act as pressure groups, eg. Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Shelter, Gingerbread, MIND, National Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NACRO), National Council for Civil Liberties, Disability Alliance, etc.
- A new role for volunteers emerges. This is seen through new organisations such as Community Services Volunteers and Voluntary Services overseas
- The development of tenants groups, consumer co-ops, community arts groups, playgroups, advice groups, citizen's action groups and environmental projects
- Pilot community development projects are set up to address poverty in selected areas and to enable local people to play a role in solving some of the problems affecting them
- The 1970s sees an economic downturn, with cuts in social expenditure on welfare, the community development projects are scrapped as failures
- The Wolfenden Report is produced. It recommends the setting up of intermediary bodies, such as community relations councils. It appears to view voluntary action as developing from a bureaucratic base with a 'trickle down' effect into neighbourhoods
- Once again the voluntary sector is hit by external pressures and appears to have lost its creativity and vitality

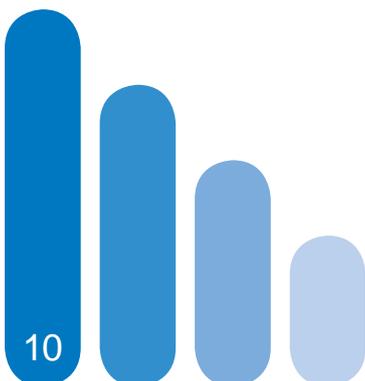


### 3. 1980s-1990s

- The 1980s see a growth in ideas of citizen involvement and participation, of empowerment, choice and opportunities for people to take control of their own lives
- Also a growth in ideas of consumerism, consumer rights and individualism
- The future of the welfare state is under debate as there is disenchantment from both the political right and left about how post-war social welfare should be organised
- A 'new' voluntary sector evolved, mainly as a result of Greater London Council (GLC) funding in the 1980s, made up of community organisations, self-help groups, co-operatives and educational, religious, artistic and cultural associations. A number of these organisations were radically different in character from previous organisations.
  - o These groups emerged to meet the needs of a different clientele from that of the 'old' voluntary sector and to fill the gap in service provision not being met by them. These new and radical organisations fundamentally questioned the status, paternalism and control of the welfare state
  - o Examples of groups set up in this period include: black self-help and campaigning projects; police monitoring groups and groups looking at police harassment or racial violence; women's projects looking at issues of rape, domestic violence and female genital mutilation; gay and lesbian projects, such as Lesbian Line; disability groups with a focus on a 'social' model of disability, rather than a medical one

### 4. 1997-present

- The last decade saw many profound changes that have particularly impacted on the role of the voluntary sector and its relationship with the state
- When the new Labour government came into power they wanted to review the role of the voluntary sector. In 1997 they produce 'Building the Future Together', a report that outlined their vision for a greater partnership between the state and the voluntary sector. They saw the voluntary sector as having a key role in community renewal and contributory citizenship
- The Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector In England (Compact), was introduced in 1998 It is a framework agreement, defined by government as 'an agreement between government and the sector to improve their relationship for mutual advantage and community gain'
- The term 'third sector' is introduced and defined by the government as  
**"a diverse, active and passionate sector. Organisations in the sector share common characteristics:**
  - o **non-governmental**
  - o **value-driven**
  - o **principally reinvest any financial surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives.****The term encompasses voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals both large and small."**

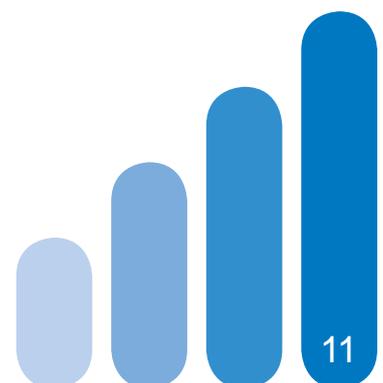


- The government's Public Service Agreement Framework and Local Government Performance Framework aim to engage this third sector in the delivery of services. Local Area Agreements are devised to deliver the priorities identified through local strategic partnerships. These agreements allow more contracting out of services to voluntary sector organisations
- The government introduced The Charities Bill 2006. Proponents said that the reforms to the charitable sector would enable it to work more closely in partnership with the state sector. Critics said it increased the regulation of charities and the reliance of the charitable sector on state funding, which undermines the independence of the charitable sector
- In May 2006 The Office for the Third Sector was created and a Minister for the Voluntary sector appointed. This marks a new era of government-voluntary sector partnership
- In 2006 'Capacity Builders' is set up to manage the 'ChangeUp' programme, developed to 'create a more effective third sector by improving support to third sector organisations'

Reflective discussion:  
Understanding the history of your organisation

Some suggested areas for discussion with the student are:

- How did the historical / political context at the time of its formation influence the organisation's mission and purpose?
- Has the organisation's purpose remained the same since its formation or changed over time?
- What has driven any changes?



## Role and purpose of the voluntary sector

As can be seen during its history, the voluntary sector has fulfilled different functions and played different roles in the development and delivery of welfare provision. It is not homogenous in that it incorporates both small grass roots groups and international agencies.

Questions about the role of the sector are ongoing. Barry Knight in his book *Voluntary Action* addresses this question of role by saying that voluntary action is essential as it acts as a force for change, improvement and equality.

**“Voluntary Action is defined as a form of energy, stemming from free will, having a moral purpose and undertaken in a spirit of independence... Voluntary action has a long and rich history characterised by change, innovation and revival as people solve problems and as new issues emerge.”**

Voluntary Action, Barry Knight (Centris, 1993)

Knight believed that voluntary action is a motivating force for people and leads to the development of organisations. He says that

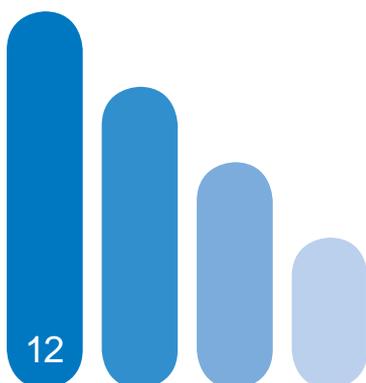
**“all voluntary organisations, projects and groups are born out of peoples aspirations for a better society for the individual, group or community. These aspirations are realised through the process of bringing people together to define the issues which affect them and to find ways of tackling those issues.”**

The characteristics of these voluntary sector organisations, developed as a result of voluntary action, are:

- Independent of state control
- Established and governed by their own members
- Non-profit making
- Of public benefit
- Make use of volunteers as well as paid workers

In its long history the voluntary sector has seen the emergence of thousands of organisations, projects and groups which form the basis for activity, where people bring about change and seek to address the issues which effect their lives. It is estimated by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO, Wilding 2004) that in addition to the 150,000 registered charities there are a further 250,000 Voluntary and Community organisations.

Many organisations start their life as a campaign and then go on to become service providers. Others are set up with a specific function eg. as a day centre for people with learning difficulties, and may at some point in their history become involved in campaign work.

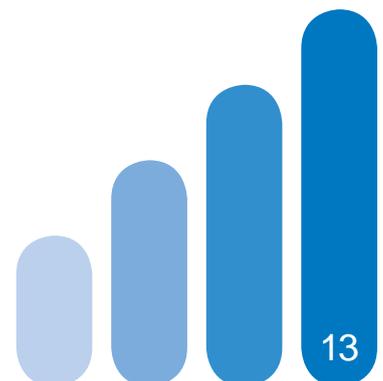


Many organisations are multi-functional, combining one or more of the following roles:

1. Developmental – identification of need and initiation of action to meet those needs including developing strategies to counter discrimination
2. Building ‘social capital’, both by promoting self organised community and collective action and by encouraging volunteering and active citizenship
3. Providing services to the public and to particular groups in the community thereby meeting social and individual needs
4. Representation – eg. advocacy on behalf of communities and the individuals they serve and represent, through campaigning and lobbying; pressure group activities or formal representation in decision making fora
5. Contributing expertise and experience to policy formation through dialogue with local and central government and other public bodies and liaison/information exchange between organisations
6. Delivering public and publicly funded services

Knight in his book stressed that by focusing on the provision of care services, organisations are in danger of losing their moral imperative to be a first force for creating a better society.

There is much current debate about the state of the voluntary sector today. Some feel it has lost its independence as organisations have had to enter into contractual arrangements with local authorities in order to stay afloat financially. These contracts and a target / output culture have changed the responsive and ‘bottom up’ way of working for some organisations. Many people recognise the benefits of closer partnership working between the sectors, but critics of recent changes feel it ties the hands and mutes the voices of the traditional voluntary sector role of being a campaigning / action counterbalance to the state. There has also been a widespread criticism of the term Third Sector as this can be seen as a bundling together of sectors within sectors and in the labelling as third, a hierarchical assumption that it is less important than the public / statutory and private / commercial sectors. Abandoning the term voluntary is also seen by some as indicative of a loss of the concept of voluntarism (use of voluntary action) and a loss of independence for the sector. However, others feel that the term voluntary sector is too often confused with volunteering.



## The relevance of the voluntary sector to social work practice

As can be seen, it is a very interesting time to be involved in the voluntary sector as it is evolving and changing in response to the current political climate and priorities.

Social work originated in the voluntary sector in philanthropic and settlement organisations, many of which are still active in East London today. Voluntary sector organisations have always played a vital role and have specialist knowledge and practice. They are up-to-date with contemporary social issues and are often at the forefront of developing new ways of working, service user empowerment and of demonstrating anti-discriminatory practice. If social workers are to be effective they need to learn from these agencies in order to develop their understanding of how to provide a service, gain insight into user perspectives and learn how to be advocates and champions for service users.

The Third Sector compact and Local Area Agreements mean that increasingly statutory social workers are working more closely with colleagues in a range of other settings. Learning opportunities in these organisations provide students with insight to services they will be purchasing and commissioning once qualified. Students will learn about how people receive services and how users can also be involved in developing their own services. They are also enabled to gain insights from different perspectives.

As can be seen students need to gain a wide range of practice experience to prepare them for a future where social workers will be based in many different settings. All students need to spend some of their practice learning time in settings where social workers undertake statutory social work. However, there is also an essential role for voluntary sector organisations in making sure that the next generation of social workers is well equipped to provide a high quality service and not simply to purchase services on behalf of service users.

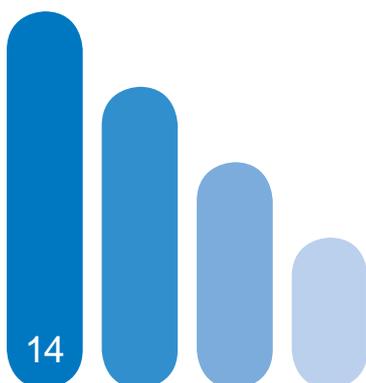
### Reflective discussion:

Understanding the role of the voluntary sector and its relevance to social work.

We hope that throughout the student's placement you will continue to explore together the question of the role and purpose of the voluntary sector and evaluate its ongoing development and how it is responding to the current issues.

As a starting point during induction it is suggested that you discuss:

- What is the core role of the organisation?
- How does the work of the organisation relate to the wider context?
- How is the work being affected by the current changes, eg. the third sector compact/local area agreements?



# Three

Understanding voluntary  
sector organisations



### 3 Understanding voluntary sector organisations

To understand the work done by voluntary sector organisations it is important to explore some of the key concepts used and identify what makes the voluntary sector distinctive. This section looks at some of the values, ethos and philosophies which inform the work and the ways that organisations are structured.

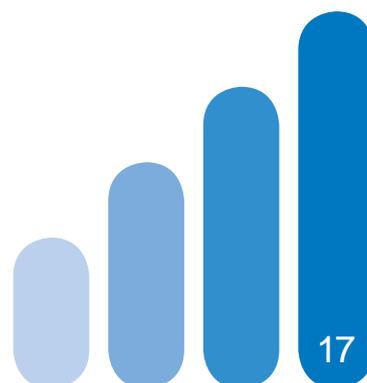
#### Philanthropy and mutual aid

Throughout its history two major traditions have dominated the voluntary sector. These are philanthropy and mutual aid (self help). Students need to understand these traditions as they continue to influence how an organisation comes into being, is constituted, funded and ultimately perceived by funding bodies and the public.

In some cases one tradition – philanthropy, has been valued more highly than mutual aid as it is more closely related to charity. This has enabled philanthropic organisations to achieve greater public giving and patronage. The charitable status of organisations based on philanthropic traditions such as Barnardos, the Royal Societies for the Deaf and Blind, etc has given them greater stability and often longevity. In 2007 the NCVO found that the 317 biggest charities shared 43% of the VCO total income.

Without an analysis of the values and aims underpinning the work, students can easily assume that philanthropic organisations are inherently better than self help organisations. On occasion students have dismissed the valuable contribution that smaller and less established organisations such as user led organisations are making. Students need to keep in mind that self help organisations experience difficulty in competing with the large philanthropic organisations for funding, support and sometimes public recognition.

Some self help groups purposefully try not to replicate the organisational systems and structures that exclude and oppress service users. For example some women's projects are organised as collectives. These structures may not fit with current demands for voluntary organisations to be service providers for local authorities. Students therefore need to understand the structure, value base and operational ethos of the voluntary sector and the organisation where they are placed.



Reflective discussion:

Is your organisation a philanthropic or self help organisation?

All organisations are different and no organisation should be pigeon-holed or limited. However it is useful to consider what type of organisation the placement agency is, and how this impacts on the services provided and the issues that arise from both philanthropy and mutual aid.

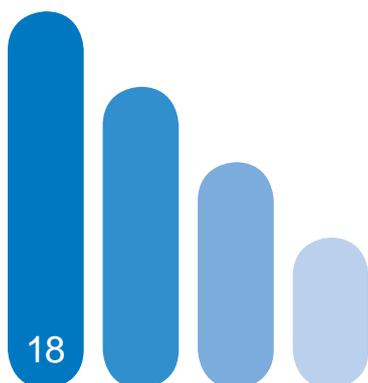
Look at the table opposite and discuss together:

- What kind of organisation is this?
- What are its key values?
- Does its work fall mainly under a philanthropic or self help / mutual aid philosophy?
- What are the advantages / disadvantages of this focus?

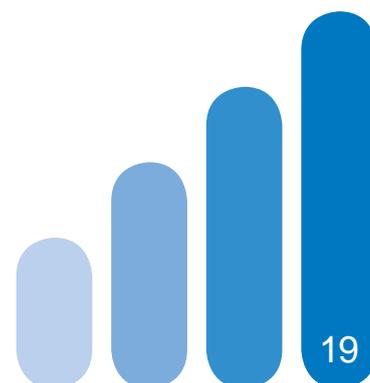
A reminder of the definitions:

Philanthropy – ‘Doing good things to help others’ (Knight, Voluntary Action)

Mutual Aid – ‘Personal gain through collective action’ (ibid)



Measurement	Philanthropic	Self Help
Structure of organisation	Charities Trusts Societies Settlements	Collectives Associations Campaigns Companies
Value base	Citizen involvement Alleviating poverty Socialist perspectives User Rights	Citizen empowerment Feminist perspectives Black perspectives Holistic approaches Disability rights Lesbian and gay rights User Rights
Methods of intervention	Social work Community work Neighbourhood work Group work Advocacy Counselling Day centres Therapeutic and non therapeutic Casework services	Community education Advocacy Campaign work Community Development Neighbourhood work Non therapeutic Case work services
Types of services	Resettlement work Alcohol / drug services Shelters work with homeless people Legal advice Day centres Youth clubs	Women's Aid Rape crisis HIV/AIDS groups Anti knife and gun campaigns Services for the Black elderly Lesbian and gay projects Disability rights campaigns After school homework clubs Youth Participation
Operational Issues	Changing to meet new social needs and legislative changes Funding issues Equalities practice	Under funding Poor patronage Lack of access to training Lagging behind re commissioning Need to develop better operational systems Governance issues



## Key concepts: 'community' and 'social exclusion'

Two key concepts that are often talked about and inform the work of the voluntary sector are notions of community and social exclusion. Many organisations are set up to address community needs which may be the result of social exclusion.

### Community

There are many definitions of the term 'community'. When people refer to 'communities of interest' this is not a particularly helpful definition as the 'interest' could be anything from concerns about cuts in local services, the European Community, to people with an interest in deep sea diving. Most people think of 'community' as meaning people living in a close geographical location. There is also an identification of separate groups within a location such as the African community. For our purposes in social work, we are interested in understanding the term community from a social policy perspective.

**“Tonnie (1963) produced his now famous distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft. Gemeinschaft refers to close relationships between people in a social unit, such as a family or tribe. In contrast Gessellschaft is an association of individuals whose relationships are indirect, sporadic and superficial. Tonnie perceived modern society as a shift from Gemeinschaft to Gessellschaft, with all that implied for fragmentation.”**

'Return to community' (pg 7, The Voluntary Ethic and Community Care by Chris Heginbotham)

Tonnie's perception of communities in transition helps us to really understand something that is at the core of voluntary sector organisations. Since the industrial revolution communities have become fragmented, with families splitting up and children moving away. Migrant communities settle, children assimilate and family networks breakdown. When processes such as discrimination and poverty are added to the fragmentation of communities, people are often no longer supported by their neighbours, extended families or immediate families and individuals can become excluded. These are the groups that often need social work intervention.

### Social exclusion

Social exclusion relates to the alienation or disenfranchisement of certain people within a society. It is often connected to a person's social class, educational status and living standards and how these might affect their access to various opportunities. It also applies to some degree to people with a disability, to minority men and women of all races, and to the elderly.

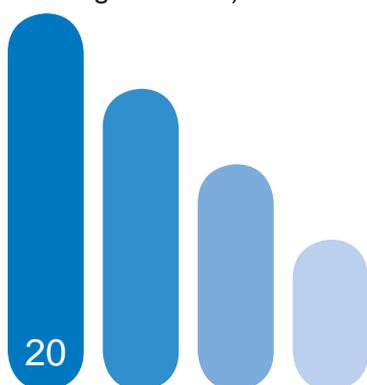
**'Social exclusion is about the inability of our society to keep all groups and individuals within reach of what we expect as a society or to realise their full potential.'** Taken from Wikipedia

The government has defined social exclusion as **“what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown”**.

Social Exclusion Unit, 2006

These definitions help us to understand how and why people become service users.

Social services and the voluntary sector often work with the same people but in different ways.



Student induction activity:

What communities does the organisation serve and who is socially excluded?

It is essential to organise a period of local orientation for the student at the start of the placement. Part of this should include students getting to know:

- The borough where the placement is located – including its geography and history
- The local neighborhood and understanding the local issues
- The demography: local communities, indicators of poverty, employment, health, housing, etc
- How local statutory bodies are working to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities, how children are being educated, protected and encouraged
- What are the local issues, concerns, threats, hopes and opportunities

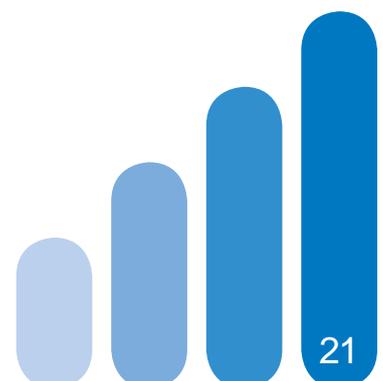
All local authorities now produce a wide range of information about the borough, its demography, the council and its services and how it aims to meet government and local targets. Key documents include:

- Community Plan
- Children's Plan
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) reports (also from the Audit Commission)
- Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) reports for adult services
- Annual Performance Appraisal (available from the DCSF) reports on children services

Students will also benefit from undertaking research about:

- Local resources and how they are used and viewed
- Transport issues
- Housing and the built environment
- Local crime and safety issues
- Community cohesion and integration

Local authority websites are useful resources. Local voluntary sector councils also keep data on local conditions. Other local projects can be a good source of information. Local papers, churches and other community organisations will also be useful.



## Core values and principles of the voluntary sector

The voluntary sector is driven by its values – working to empower people, to combat poverty and oppression, and encouraging participation. Most consider the value base and philosophy of the voluntary sector to be its major strength. Many recognise that the values underpinning social work first found a voice in the voluntary sector.

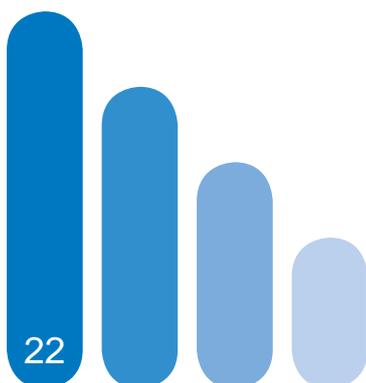
The ethos and approach of agencies vary but there are some key principles common across most voluntary sector organisations. These are:

- Citizen involvement is a fundamental principal of voluntary sector organisations and methods to involve people include user participation and user empowerment.
- The organisational processes and structures should reflect these inherent values of encouraging participation and empowerment.
- Issues of power and control, marginalisation and discrimination should be discussed and addressed, not ignored.
- A 'bottom up' community or user-led approach is valued more than a government directed or 'top down' approach.

## Involvement, empowerment and participation

In its broadest sense, citizen involvement is concerned with the rights of people to play a part in the decision making processes which affect their lives. This discussion looks at citizen involvement in relation to welfare agencies – ie. the voluntary sector, although citizen involvement is also concerned with decision making at local and national levels. Citizen involvement and citizen participation are interchangeable terms.

Beresford and Croft identify two approaches to citizen involvement: Consumerist and Democratic (Citizen Involvement – Practical Social Work, 1993, MacMillan). They believe that it is important to make a distinction between these approaches. Consumerism is largely only concerned with consultation through information gathering, whilst the Democratic approach seeks to involve people through participation and empowerment. Most voluntary sector agencies attempt to work with the democratic model of citizen involvement rather than the consumerist model.



Sherry Arnstein's **Ladder of Citizen Participation** provides a useful way of looking at citizen involvement as a continuum that runs from tokenistic consultation to full participation.

Arnstein defines citizen participation as:

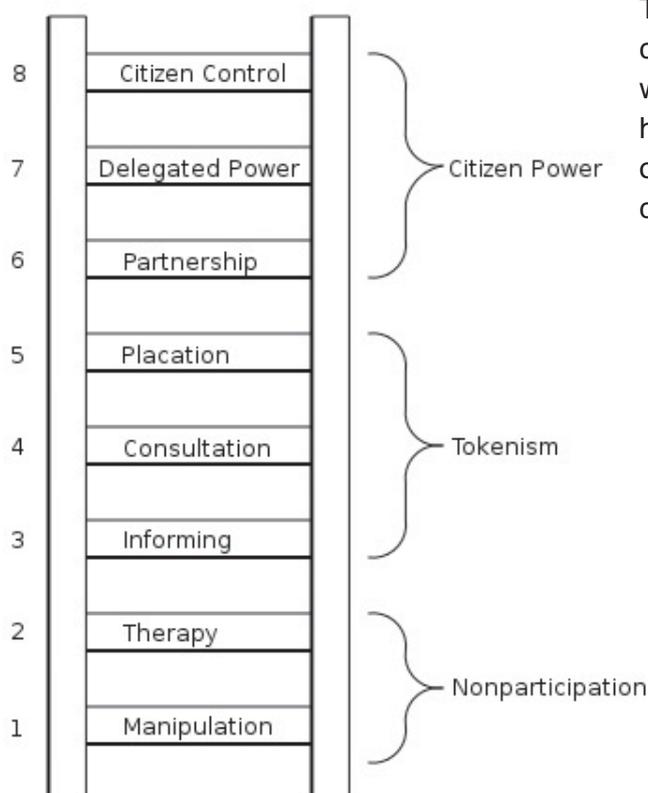
**“the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic process, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies set, tax resources allocated, programmes are operated and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out. In short it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of an affluent society.”**

(Critical Issues in Participation by Christine Hallett, Association of Community Workers, 1987)

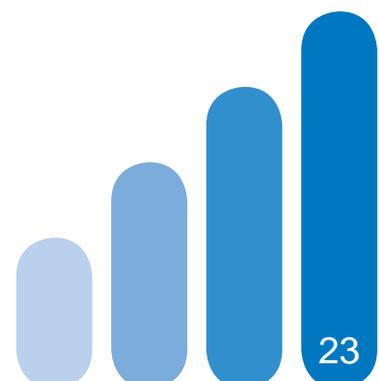
In Arnstein's definition power is seen as central to an understanding of participation.

Voluntary sector organisations are often critical of state interventions as they can be tokenistic or non-participatory. The voluntary sector values empowerment, involvement and participation, so a variety of methods are used to promote the involvement of local people, including service users in the organisation and its activities. These include:

- Advisory groups
- User groups / forums
- Volunteering
- Management committee membership
- Advocacy (peer, group, citizen)
- Partnerships
- Information sharing
- Collective action
- Raising awareness / consciousness raising
- Supporting / encouraging user determination



The term empowerment – used a lot in community development and youth participation work, is interesting as it recognises that everyone has some inherent power which can be bought out and developed. This is in direct contrast to concepts of powerlessness.



Reflective discussion:

How does the organisation enable and encourage involvement and participation?

It is useful to discuss how that users of services are involved in the running of the organisation, how much power they have and the level of their participation. The student should give thought to the methods of engagement they will use when working with groups of service users.

## Organisational legal structures

Understanding the structure of an organisation is important. The values, philosophy and purpose of an organisation will all affect the way in which it is structured. The two things organisations need to consider when they are setting up is their legal status and whether their aims and objectives are charitable.

Most voluntary organisations have a constitution and recognised legal status. This determines the governance of the organisation and who can be a member of the organisation.

There are four types of organisations

- Private company limited by shares
- Private company limited by guarantee
- Private unlimited company
- Public limited company

## Charitable organisations

Most voluntary organisations, at least in the beginning stages opt for becoming a private company limited by guarantee as this status limits the liability of members to the amount they each agree to contribute to the companies assets if it is wound up.

Many voluntary sector organisations strive to gain charitable status and this increases their capacity to fund raise. However Charities must not have political affiliations and can not make a profit. The new Charities Act 2006 sets out 13 charitable purposes and any charity must have purposes falling within this list. A group is charitable if all its aims and objectives as stated in the constitution are charitable. The new categories include:

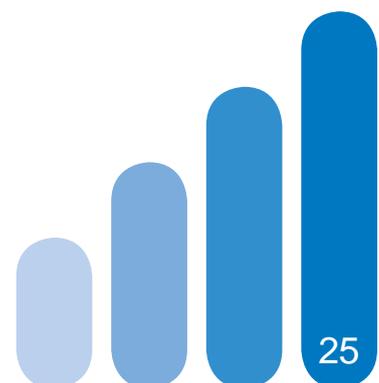
- The relief of poverty
- The advancement of religion
- The advancement of education
- Advancement of health and the saving of life
- Advancement of citizenship and community development
- The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation, or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity

Student induction activity:  
Introduction to the organisation

Ask the student to review your organisation's documentation (annual reports grant applications, etc) and draft an introductory statement that sets out:

- How the organisation was formed
- The legal status of the organisation
- What is its function, goals and purpose
- How the organisation is governed and managed

The statement can be used in the learning agreement and in the final placement report.



## Organisational structures and management systems

The organisations that are currently providing placements for SfC reflect a range of organisational and management structures.

Some organisations work within a formal hierarchical arrangement whilst others are managed solely by a management committee.

Learning about the function and role, legal status and management of the organisation whilst on placement will help students to identify best practice in the management of services when they are purchasing services as a qualified social worker.

The placement can also offer insight into how the structure of an organisation enables it to facilitate organisational practice and engage with processes such as contracting (agreeing service level agreements and contracts as part of Local Area Agreements) and fund raising.

Some organisational structures and ways of organising include:

User led self-help / mutual aid organisations:

- Promotion and maintenance of mutual support networks
- Involvement of volunteers
- Collective approaches to working
- Workers may be linked to the issues the organisation is centred on

Community organisations:

- Service orientated
- Collaboration between agencies including statutory agencies
- Management may include partners / funders
- Worker-led
- Collective and hierarchical structure / approach to working

Philanthropic / charitable organisations:

- Formal hierarchical
- Board level directors made up of funders, professionals and those with special interests
- Director-led workforce

Reflective discussion:

The impact of the organisation's structure

The student will benefit from gaining an understanding of the organisation's structure – for example enabling them to attend management committee and board meetings.

Once they have had opportunities to understand the structure it would be helpful to explore with them the following questions:

- What are the strengths, weaknesses and issues involved in the organisational structure?
- Who is involved in the management and what skills and knowledge do they bring?
- How does the structure help or hinder provision of services?

## Developing an agency profile for student placements

Agency profiles contain information about an organisation, for example, its:

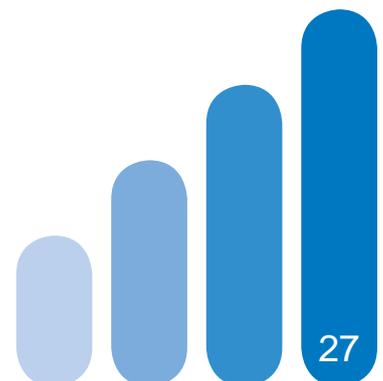
- History
- Organisation and structure
- Type of management
- Services provided
- Methods and theories used
- Value base and philosophy

Agency profiles help both the agency and the potential students to be clear about what is on offer and what can be learned by a student on placement.

Groups considering taking students on placement will be asked to draw up their own agency profile. This profile can be added to, with information from the student's research and discussions suggested in this section.

It is important that students gain an understanding of the history and context of the placement organisation, its structure and ways of functioning, etc. In addition it is useful for students to find out:

- How the organisation is funded and what funding criteria it has to meet
- How the organisation evaluates its own services and how its service users are involved in evaluating services
- What policies are in place and what policies need to be developed
- What the organisation's relationship with the local authority is and if the organisation is providing any care services for the local authority





# Four

Methods, processes  
and theories



## 4 Methods, processes and theories

### Practice in the voluntary sector: what is done and how it is done

Like other practitioners, voluntary sector workers often appear, even to themselves, to be working by using their intuition. However, the vast array of approaches and methods employed by voluntary sector groups and the outcome-based nature of the work, eg. getting the funding or contract, setting up the group, or organising the event, can often disguise the intricate details involved in completing a task or process. Similarly practitioners do not often stop to reflect on the theories and ideas that inform the way they work.

Working with students requires voluntary sector supervisors and assessors to be in touch with the methods, processes and theories that inform the work and service provision.

This part of the guide explores the different working practices of some of the agencies working with SfC. We have interpreted and presented these in the form of six models. These models are not exhaustive or authoritative; they simply represent possible ways of working in voluntary sector organisations. By breaking down practice into the methods, processes and theories, we hope to encourage practice assessors to consider their own practice.

Case study activities are given after each model. These will encourage students to think about how they would work using that model and what they can learn from it to apply to their social work practice. Students should be given time to consider the case study, and then asked to bring their responses to discuss.

Most organisations combine elements of a range of models into their work practices. It is important to recognise that many theories and methods underpin the work being done. In many respects the voluntary sector leads the way and is well placed to ensure that the theories and methods being used become central to Social Work education.

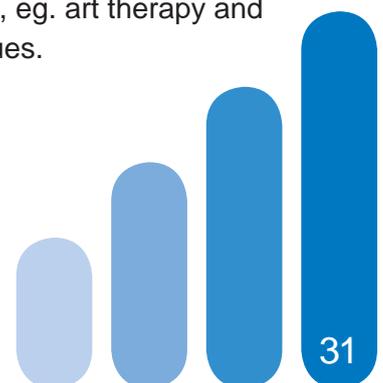
### Methods, processes and theory

According to the Collins dictionary 'process' is "a series of actions which produce change or development... the steps one takes"; and 'Method' is a way of proceeding or doing things.

Recognising the methods and processes used helps us to understand the theories behind the work. In turn understanding the theoretical base of work in the voluntary sector helps social work students see the value and transferability of the ideas and processes. Some methods commonly used by voluntary sector agencies include:

- Advice work
- Advocacy
- Assessment
- Campaign work
- Case work
- Community work (development, action, etc)
- Counselling formal / informal
- Direct service provision
- Education work (incl. consciousness raising)
- Fund raising
- Group work
- Information giving / sharing
- Liaison and networking
- Mediation and negotiation
- Mentoring
- Organisation (eg. meetings, events, etc)
- Outreach
- Peer work
- Research
- Support work

Some voluntary organisations also use therapeutic methods, eg. art therapy and behavioural techniques.



## Theory

Theory seems less concrete because it involves “abstract knowledge or reasoning” (Collins).

David Howe provides a useful definition:

**“A theory may be defined as a set of concepts and propositions that present an organised view of phenomena. By proposing order and pointing out relationships, theories enable their users to do four important things:-**

**1. to describe**

**2. to explain**

**3. to predict**

**4. to control and bring about.”**

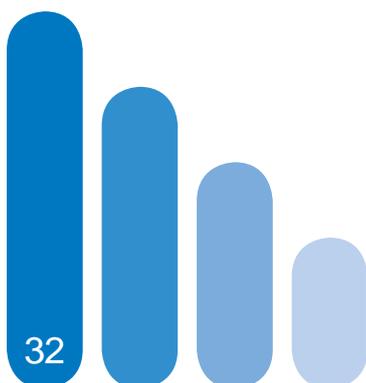
‘Introduction to Social Work Theory’ (pg 12, Community Care practice handbook by David Howe, 1987)

Social work training places an emphasis on students being able to relate theory to practice. Students are expected to learn about various theories including: theories about poverty; oppression and human liberation; feminism; black perspectives; and disability rights.

Additionally, in the voluntary sector, students can learn about theories that aim to involve citizens or ‘users’ in society, eg. participation. The voluntary sector also uses a wide variety of ideas on how to help the individual – eg. empowerment, collective action and self help. Organisations may use their own strategic ideas about how to work with a particular group, for example black self help which combines ideas of consciousness-raising alongside practical support, education, training and empowerment.

Voluntary agencies offer learning opportunities in specific areas of practice not usually available in statutory placements, such as substance abuse, HIV issues, bereavement and other kinds of counselling.

Voluntary organisations often develop their theory base from the ‘bottom up’, creating strategies resulting from individual and collective action at a grassroots level.



# Models

## Model one: Community / neighbourhood work

Alan Twelvetree defines community work as:

**“The process of assisting ordinary people to improve their own communities by undertaking collective action”.**

Community Work, Practical Social Work Series, BASW 2003

Henderson and Thomas' book 'Skills in Neighbourhood Work' suggested a staged process to community work interventions. This includes:

### Technique

#### 1. Study the situation – define the problem

Identify the social context and how widespread the problem is; and who is affected by it. Do people all view the problem the same way?

#### 2. Network with the community, establish relationships, form links

Undertake outreach work and meetings; arrange activities to raise awareness of issues and to bring people together

#### 3. Clarify objectives, set goals and decide on priorities and the process to achieve goals

Formulate demands and define solutions, eg. community action / campaigns or support groups

#### 4. Create a basis for organisation and resources to promote activity / action

Forming groups or organisations and registering / constituting them. Develop fundraising strategies and gaining resources

#### 5. Work on the agreed programme of action

Running the organisation / group / campaign and keeping the activities going. This includes dealing with any issues and resolving differences and conflicts, etc

#### 6. Review and evaluate action

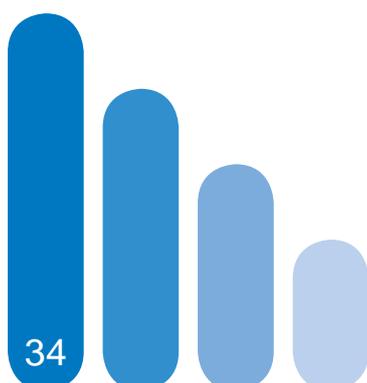
Monitor effectiveness of the programme and value for money, review original aims and objectives – are they fit for purpose?

#### 7. Endings

Community work intervention requires that the worker assists the group in ways that promote the group's development of its own skills and knowledge, eventually making the role of the community worker redundant. Part of the process is therefore when the community worker ends their involvement with the group

Most voluntary sector organisations, projects and groups undertake community work to initiate or support the development of their group. However the term 'community work' suffers from meaning too many things. With many types of worker being based in the community (community warden, community liaison officer, community nurse, etc) what community work involves is often misunderstood or diluted by a range of purposes.

Also see 'Analysing Community Work' by Keith Pople (OU Press, 2000).



## Student case study activity

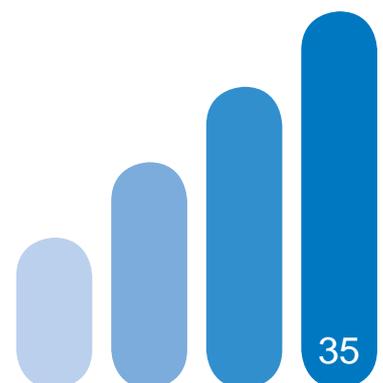
### Community / neighbourhood work

Imagine you are approached by a group of tenants living on a local housing estate. They ask for your help with the problem they have identified – a lack of children's play facilities in the area.

- How would you go about supporting the tenants group?
- What skills would you need to use to be effective in this situation?
- What would you need to ensure you didn't do?
- Who else would need to be involved?

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?



## Model two: Community development work

The type of work that involves planned developmental interventions with groups is better referred to as community development work.

Community development work has its own National Occupational Standards. This defines the work:

**“The key purpose of community development work is collectively to bring about social change and justice, by working with communities to:**

- **Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities**
- **Plan, organise and take action**
- **Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the action**

**All in ways which challenge oppression and tackle inequalities.”**

National Occupational Standards (January 2003)

The six key roles of a community development worker are:

- Role A: develop working relationships with communities and organisations
- Role B: encourage people to work with and learn from each other
- Role C: work with people in communities to plan for change and take collective action
- Role D: work with people in communities to develop and use frameworks for evaluation
- Role E: develop community organisations
- Role F: reflect on and develop own practice and role

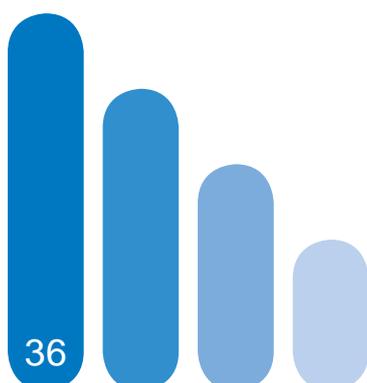
The core values behind community development work are:

- Social justice
- Self-determination
- Working and learning together
- Sustainable communities
- Participation
- Reflective practice

One of the most important aspects of community development work is to avoid dependency. This is done by enabling those involved to determine their own needs and actions and to develop their confidence, skills and knowledge to the point where they can operate independently.

The other distinctive characteristic is a concentration on challenging inequality. This is done by enabling everyone to have equal access to services and to participate fully in society.

Many voluntary sector organisations operate within the value base and role framework for community development work. It is useful for social work students to compare their own key roles and values to those of community development work.



## Student case study activity

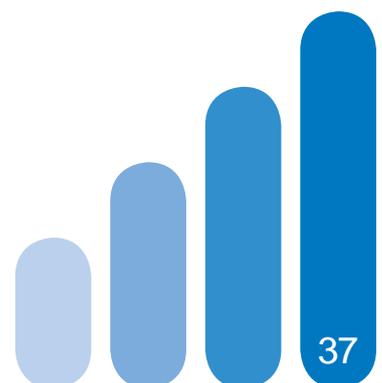
### Community development work

Imagine you are a community development worker working in a community health project. You are working with a group of local Somali women who have come to the country fairly recently. They are feeling marginalised and unable to access local services including health services.

- How would you go about developing work with this group?
- How would you ensure that what you did followed the values and methods of community development as opposed to just providing services for the group?
- What skills would you need to use to be effective in this situation?
- What would you need to ensure you didn't do?

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?



## Model three: Social work service provision

### Providing social care, welfare and preventative services

Increasingly voluntary organisations have become service providing or are being set up to deliver care and welfare services traditionally provided by the state. 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' (DOH, January 2006) places the third sector at the heart of government care services. Commissioning policies and protocols have been agreed in the last two years to facilitate this change. The transfer of care services to the private voluntary and independent sector is part of a bigger process where many public services – including leisure services, are no longer under the remit of local authorities. The NCVO has identified this as leading to the emergence of 'Hybrid Organisations' (eg. trust schools) that sit on the boundaries of the public and private sectors.

The government has set up the Office of the Third Sector which provides information, advice and guidance on commissioning, procurement, building capacity and innovation in the CVS. It says that it has invested £111 million through its future builders investment programme to develop organisations wishing to provide public services.

The government report 'Partnership in Public Services' sets out the ethical and political dilemmas and questions the sector is struggling with, in relation to the transformation of public services or the transfer of public services to the VCS.

For students on placement, learning about service provision in the voluntary sector should include:

- Understanding FACS (Fair Access to Care Services)
- Assessment and care management
- Commissioning
- Reviewing contracts and advocating on behalf of the service user
- Evaluating services

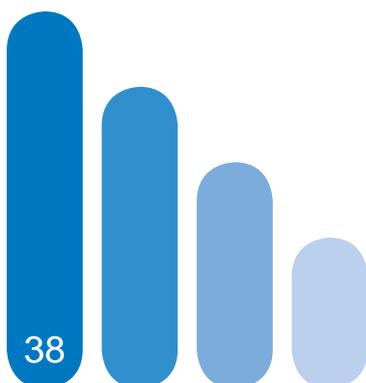
Students can also contribute to the development of services. Through this work students will have the opportunity to apply the social work theories they have learned about.

Examples of the range of services being provided include:

- Welfare and support services for children and families
- Residential and day care services for the elderly
- Drug rehabilitation services
- Supporting women surviving domestic violence and prostitution
- Advice services for refugees
- An advocacy service for black and minority ethnic people with disabilities
- A project for young people who become parents as teenagers

Another useful concept that students can explore in relation to service provision is Social Enterprise. This is either the activity of trading or selling goods and services for a social purpose, or an organisation that undertakes this activity.

Appropriate activities might be to help deliver training, helping to write publications and of course helping service users to develop their own social enterprises, for example helping unemployed young people or disabled people start their own business.



## Student case study activity

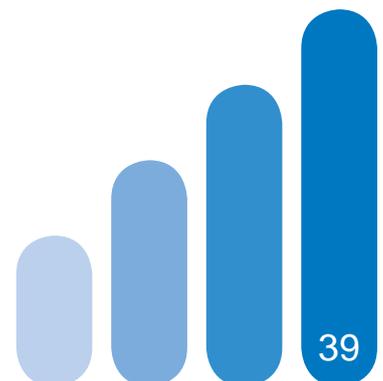
### Social work service provision

Imagine you are working in a centre that runs a daily lunch club for Bengali elders using funding from a service level agreement with the local council. Many of the elders have disabilities and are transported to the centre for a session that includes activities and a meal. Your role is to organise a programme of activities for the elders, including visits by health professionals and special events.

- How would you go about developing the programme of activities?
- What would you need to consider when deciding on the programme?
- What skills would you need to use to be effective in this situation?
- What things would you need to ensure you didn't do?

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?



## Model four: Case work in the voluntary sector

Case work is usually associated with social work. However, voluntary sector organisations often undertake case work using many of the same methods as social workers. This section looks at different aspects of case work:

- Assessment of need
- Task centred approach
- Holistic approach
- Crisis intervention
- Systems theory

Students are able to apply social work theories and methods in any case work undertaken.

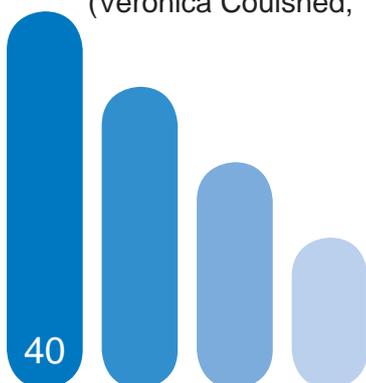
### What is assessment of need?

Assessment is an integral part of service provision and the ability to collect and collate relevant information is essential in this process.

Coulshed defines assessment of need as

“... an on going process in which the client participates, whose purpose it is to understand people in relation to their environment; it is a basis for planning needs to be done, to maintain, improve or bring about change in the person, the environment or both. The skills of undertaking and producing an assessment depends on the administrative talent coupled with human relations skills... Assessment is therefore a process and a product of our understanding. It is on this basis of understanding people and circumstances that we reach initial appraisals of what used to be called diagnostic formulations which: describe explain predict evaluate prescribe.”

(Veronica Coulshed, 1991)



Case work practice is expected to be evidence-based. This means that it should:

- Use knowledge from research and practice about the outcomes of services and interventions to inform assessment and planning
- Record and update information systematically
- Learn from the views of users of services
- Valuate continuously whether the intervention is effective
- Evaluate rigorously the information, processes and outcomes from your intervention
- Assessment should be informed by a theoretical base social policy, legislation and organisation policy and procedure.

(Source: Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families Department of Health, 2000)

In working with a number of voluntary organisations we have found that the assessment systems being used can be informal but also holistic. Many organisations try to see the whole person and will intervene to work out a number of problems. The DOH Assessment Framework stresses the need to have an ‘ecological approach’ to assessment. This is to locate the needs of the service user in the wider context of the family and the culture in which they live. In assessing the needs of children and their families they highlight the importance of understanding the interface between the environmental factors and the child’s development and the association between economic disadvantage and the chances that the child will fail to thrive.

Students can offer a great deal to voluntary organisations in relation to improving the organisations systems and policies to more formally assess need. Students can also bring a range of social work intervention tools and techniques to case work. Some of the key case work methods used by students are set out on the following pages. These are: the Task centred approach; crisis intervention and systems theory.

### Task centred approach

“The journey from agreeing the goal to achieving it is measured in small steps called tasks. These are pieces of work done by the client and the worker in order to help the client achieve the goal, which in turn is designed to alleviate the problem. Tasks are rungs of a ladder which begins with the present problem and reaches to the future goal. Tasks are discussed each time the worker and client get together, first reviewing tasks which have already been done then developing tasks for the next stage.”

(Doel in Practising Social Work Harvey, et al, Routledge, 1994)

### Technique

Task centred work is sequential in its application. The notion of ‘built in’ contracts is designed to achieve the set goal or goals, and is central to this approach. The preparatory stage (sometimes referred to as the “mandate for intervention”) is crucial since the premise is, if there is no mandate, then there is no work. Here the worker finds out what, if anything needs to be done. In this context, a mandate constitutes a clear request from the client.

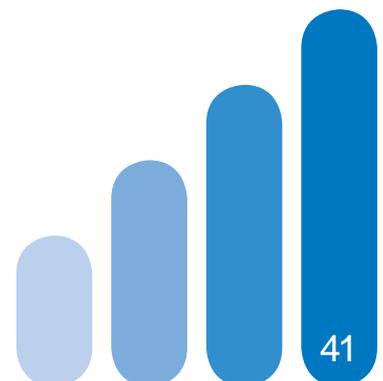
## Stages

### Stage 1: Identifying concerns and problems

- What are the client’s concerns?
- Are they being expressed by others in the client’s life?
- Are there concerns identified by the worker?

The client is encouraged to freely discuss their problems and to express their concerns. Details are not essential at this stage, nor should the worker offer solutions. Rather the worker should communicate interest and support.

- List the concerns and problems  
The client and worker jointly make a list of the problems they want to discuss further.
- Details of the problems  
Each problem or concern is examined in detail. The worker’s role is investigatory, using questions such as who, why and what to tease out the detail of each problem.
- Prioritising  
The worker helps the client to prioritise each problem in turn in order to establish which issue of greatest concern to the client and which area should be prioritised to begin working on first. A maximum of three areas is recommended to begin with.



In seeking to help the client prioritise the issues the worker would help the client to consider a number of factors including:

- “The urgency of the problem
- The consequences of not alleviating the problem
- The chances of success at alleviating the problem
- The ability of the worker and agency to work on the problem
- The motivation of the client to work on the problem
- The support which the client will receive from other people
- The specific nature of the problem.”

(Doel in Practising Social Work - Have et al, Routledge, 1994)

### Stage 2: Agreeing the goal and time limits

The worker and client jointly formulate the objectives. The worker agrees targets for change with the client. Goals should relate to the problem, but the route to achieving the identified goals may be indirect. Goals must be achievable.

Issues facing the client:

- Does the client really want to achieve the goals identified?
- Are the goals practical?
- What are the likely obstacles?
- Are the goals within the client’s control?

Issues facing the worker:

- Does the worker feel that it is right to assist the client in achieving the goals?
- Are the client’s goals in line with the policies of the organisation?
- Do the goals have negative implications on

ongoing work with other members of the client’s family that the worker has a working relationship with? (If this is the case the worker will need to relinquish the case to another worker or agency).

- The time limit  
The client and worker jointly agree the time frame to achieve the goals set. Time limits might be aligned to ‘mini contracts’ tasks which are in themselves steps to achieving the larger goal).
- The contract  
A contract detailing the identified problems and deadlines must be drawn up. The contract must outline the frequency of contact as well as the commitments of each of the parties involved. A copy of this must be given to each person involved in the process.

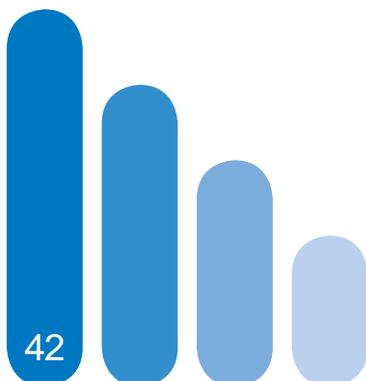
### Stage 3: The tasks

Both worker and client carry out the agreed tasks. Periodic reviews are carried out at all of the set meetings.

### Stage 4: Ending the work

Ending the work is a pre requisite of the task centred approach. However ending the tasks does not necessarily mean the end of contact between the worker and the client, nor does it exclude other ongoing work. Ending the task is specifically related to the end of the period allocated for achieving the goal.

Ending the task is also a period of evaluation.



## Conclusion

A task centred approach allows the client to identify and set goals and tasks, and to some extent, dictate the pace of change. Tasks successfully completed can help the client to begin regaining control of their lives. It can also assist in strengthening the client's self esteem. It is therefore the achievement of the tasks themselves that can be acts of empowerment.

A task centred approach can demonstrate that intervention does not necessarily mean a worker taking over the client's life. It can mean that the client can maintain control over input from the worker.

## Student case study activity

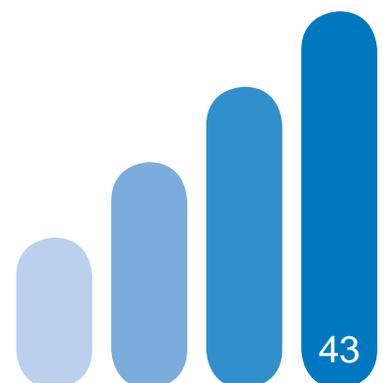
### A task centred approach

Imagine you are working in an agency set up to support young people who have got into trouble for their aggressive and violent behaviour. You are working with one young man who has to show he has changed his behaviour or else he will be sent to a young offender's institution.

- How would you help the young man to identify and prioritise his problems and concerns?
- How would you deal with any contradictions between the young man's priorities and goals and those of the authorities?
- What skills would you need to use to be effective in this situation?
- What would you need to ensure you didn't do?
- How would you ensure your intervention was time limited and end it effectively?

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?

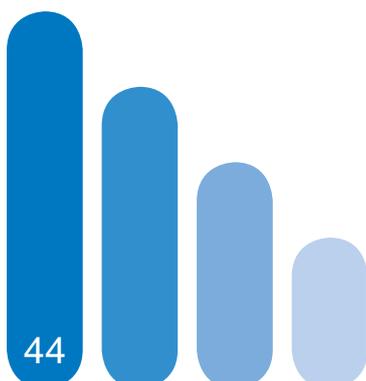
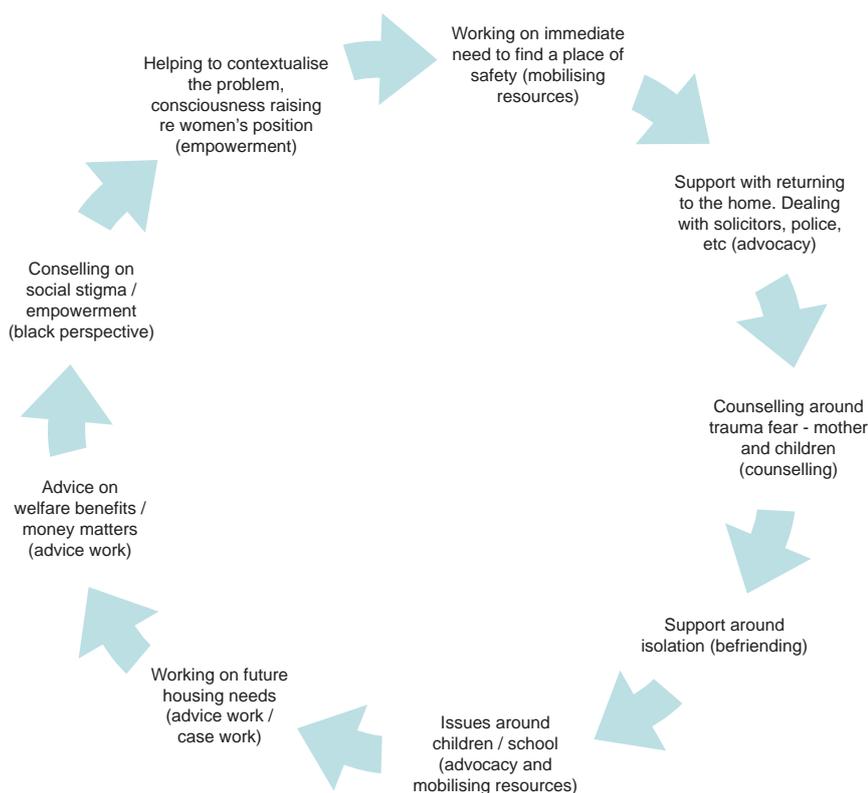


## Holistic approach

Holism is the philosophy that 'the whole is greater than the sum of the parts'. It is a philosophy which can be applied to many disciplines including medicine and psychiatry. It is included here because many voluntary sector organisations particularly black led groups describe their way of working as being holistic.

The holistic approach often used in the voluntary sector means working with the whole person and not simply their immediate problem. It requires practitioners to have a flexible approach, a wide knowledge base and a multitude of skills. Moreover the holistic approach requires practitioners to make connections between problems and issues and to perceive the wider context of individual problems.

Holistic approaches look at assessing a wide range of needs and not just the immediately obvious needs. For many black led voluntary agencies the holistic approach operates within a framework of a black perspective. It allows in-depth work with individuals to be part of a wider strategy of community development, support, and self help. Where problems and issues are wide spread or persistent, black voluntary agencies have developed support services.



## Student case study activity

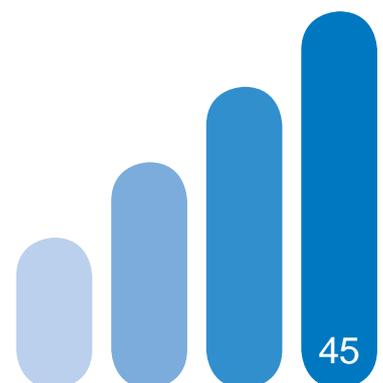
### A holistic approach

Imagine you are working in an agency set up to support women experiencing domestic violence. Look at the diagram opposite and think about:

- How you would decide where to start supporting the women
- What skills you would need to use to be effective in this situation
- What you would need to ensure you didn't do
- Who else you would need to involve and how you would involve them
- How you would ensure you had considered all of the women's needs

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?



## Crisis intervention

The term 'crisis' in this context is not to be confused with every day usage and their meanings. Neither is its meaning interchangeable with the term 'stress', although unbearable stress is an important factor in crisis.

One definition of the term 'crisis' in this model is that it is "an upset in a steady state" (Rapoport, 1970 in Coulshed, 1994). Another definition is "the experience may be so overwhelming and threatening that the individual cannot cope with their existing resources" (Pittman 1993 in Harvey et al). An important premise of this theory, therefore, is that in a crisis situation the individual's usual ways of coping do not work. The individual endeavours to return to the previous level of functioning (which might have been inadequate). Thus, crisis intervention centres on relieving current stresses, to return the individual to their previous level of coping.

Crisis intervention requires that the practitioner has a grasp of the situation and feels confident in dealing with the presenting issues, and is aware of "the major source of challenge to them personally..." (Harvey & Philpot, 1994).

### Key concepts

Crisis is short term phenomenon which is thought to last approximately six weeks. A crisis has a beginning, a middle and an end. By definition therefore, crisis intervention is time limited.

Crisis is associated with life events and can be precipitated by the individual making adjustments, eg. moving house, unemployment, changes in the family, bereavement, etc.

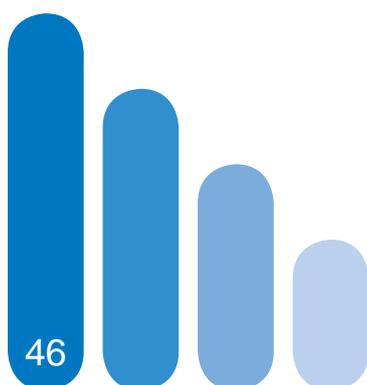
In the initial stages of crisis, there is a rise in tension in the individual. This is a reaction to heightened stress levels. In the second stage, the individual tries to make use of their normal problem solving mechanisms. If these fail, tensions rise and the individual gets upset at their ineffectiveness. In the final stage, if the problem is still unresolved, the individual tries to dispose of the problem, by for example, redefining it as "something less threatening, or distancing themselves from it" (Coulshed, 1994).

Although an individual in crisis is at times difficult to detect, crisis tends to follow a typical pattern:

- The person is striving to gain control and is open to suggestions which will assist him/her in recovery
- Thoughts and behaviour might become "agitated, confused hostile, ashamed or helpless" (Coulshed, 1991) The individual might become irritable and withdrawn. The individual might experience sleeplessness, tension headaches, etc
- Attempts at solving difficulties might be unfocused and confused
- Crisis can ultimately prove beneficial to the individual, since, going through a crisis can teach the individual new and more effective coping strategies.

The worker's role in crisis intervention is to:

- Think clearly
- Keep calm
- In the acute stages of the crisis, to act as a role model for the client in effective problem solving, (lead by example)
- Give information and advice
- Be active, directive, systematic (if required);
- Use the client's openness in accepting help to inhibit flight
- Encourage the client to face up to the future without fear, shame, etc.
- Encourage self understanding in the client;
- Promote the client's problem solving skills (teaching the client how to reduce problems to manageable bits).



## Technique

### Initial stage

At the first interview it is important that the worker concentrates on the present circumstances of the crisis. Encourage the client to grasp their situation. Questions such as “what happened?” should be asked. These assist the client to cognitively grasp the experience. The worker should be empathetic.

### Identifying precipitating factors

The client and worker jointly assess what precipitated the crisis. Ask questions such as “When did things start to go wrong? What happened then? What is happening now? What is bothering you most? Who do you think will give you support?” (Coulshed 1994).

The worker should at this point be:

- Assessing the ego strengths of the client
- Assessing the potential available resources

Ascertain what is the most pressing problem. The objectives here are to:

- Divide the problem into manageable sections;
- Keep the client reality orientated
- Build a relationship based on the worker’s expertise
- Restore the client’s sense of trust

Encourage the client to settle on one target area:

- Ascertain the goal
- Clarify the tasks
- Clarify the client’s role
- Clarify the worker’s role

A contract with the client outlining further work should be drawn up in which the allocation of tasks (client’s and worker’s) are clearly defined.

The client having something to do before the next meeting assists in reinstating a sense of autonomy and in becoming active in problem solving. It also prevents disintegration in the client.

Being optimistic at this stage assists in reducing the client’s anxiety and feeling of hopelessness.

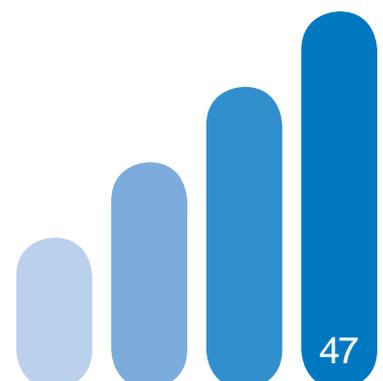
### Middle stage

At the next meeting, encourage the client to decide on the schedule of help. This assists in establishing a sense of autonomy, which helps to prevent the client developing dependence on the worker.

- Review any tasks completed
- Clarify tasks decided upon
- Clarify the goals (goals should be kept to a minimum)
- Clarify the client’s role
- Clarify the worker’s role
- Agree the number of meetings (four to six contacts is recommended)

At the second meeting and in subsequent meetings the worker should endeavour to fill in missing data. Emphasis is always on the here and now since this helps the client to remain focused in the present as opposed to being focused in the past or in wishful thinking. Filling in missing data also helps the worker to establish links (which might not have been recognised in the first Stage) with past conflicts and to point out any possible connections with past crisis. This helps the client’s cognitive processes in grasping the problem, at the same time it keeps the client focused in the present.

Encourage the client to talk freely. This helps to relieve tension, and, expressing feelings can release mental energies which can be utilised problem solving.



## Termination stage

The last two interviews consist of the termination stage. Here processes associated with endings apply. Evaluation also occurs at this stage.

## Conclusion

It is harmful to indefinitely prolong crisis intervention since this ignores the natural growth potential present in all human beings. Fostering dependency should therefore be avoided. It is important to note however, that in some chronic situations, Crisis Intervention might be a stepping stone to longer term pieces of work.

## Student case study activity

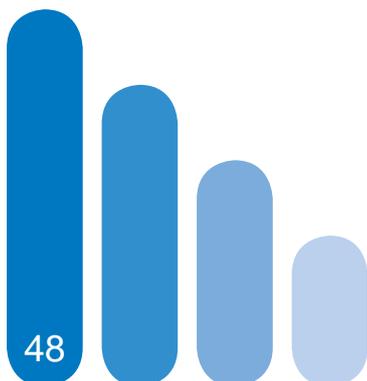
### Crisis intervention

Imagine you are working in Victim Support. A woman who has been a victim of a burglary with violence which took place in her own home is referred to you. She is afraid to go back home and has to deal with the emotional trauma and the practical issues of having had her personal possessions such as credit cards stolen.

- How would you go about developing a supportive relationship with the woman without making her too dependent on you?
- How would you help her deal with both her practical and emotional needs?
- What skills would you need to use to be effective in this situation?
- What would you need to ensure you didn't do?
- How would you ensure your intervention was time limited and end it effectively?

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?



## Systems theory

The holistic approach derived from systems theory, which was developed by biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1936. He proposed that all organisms were systems composed of sub-systems and in turn part of super-systems. He identified a system as consisting of four things:

1. Objects: the parts, elements, or variables within the system
2. Attributes: the qualities or properties of the system and its objects
3. Internal relationships among its objects
4. The environment the systems exist in

A system, then, is a set of 'things' that affect one another within an environment and form a larger pattern that is different from any of the parts. Systems have boundaries and 'things' are usually exchanged more within boundaries than between them. Understanding the affects of these boundaries and whether a system is closed or open is important. More than 50 years later, our understanding of systems has evolved to the point where we incorporate many of the concepts into our everyday language. We speak of a health care system, a family system, information, banking and political systems, etc.

Many feel that breaking things down into systems enables them to be understood more easily. Understanding how systems work and the way in which different elements within a system can affect the outcomes of events is considered a useful way of understanding human interaction – particularly family systems.

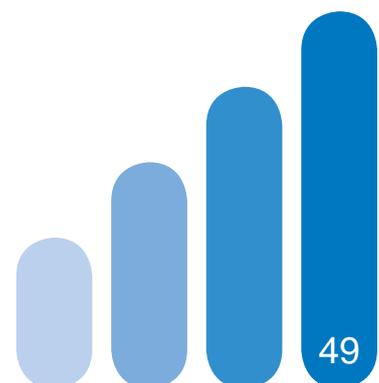
A systems approach believes that a system is greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore it requires investigation of the whole situation rather than one or two aspects of a problem.

Mistakes can't be blamed on one person; rather a systems analyst would investigate how the mistake occurred within a sub-system and look for opportunities to make corrections in the processes used. The implication of this in working with people is that a person's sphere of influence or social / family system may well influence their behaviour, and so the context of behaviour needs to be considered.

This theory is used a lot by those working with individuals who are experiencing some relationship difficulties. Family therapy draws heavily on systems theory by concentrating on involving the whole family in trying to solve the problems of one member, rather than working with that person in isolation. There is recognition of the need to change the environment and not just the individual's behaviour.

Systems theory is a useful 'tool' for understanding and clarifying how disruption / dysfunctions in the client's family network can (and sometimes do) negatively affect the client's life; and how malfunctions of the wider systems (eg. Schools, DSS, Hospitals, public transport) can effect dysfunctions in subsystems such as the family and the individual.

It is a tool which demonstrates the importance of support systems and other informal networks in the lives of individuals and which allows many influences, which might otherwise be overlooked to be included in an assessment.



## Key concepts

Human beings are biological and psychological systems.

All systems have boundaries which make them stand out ie. differentiate them from other systems and their environment. However systems can considerably overlap or overlay each other.

Systems can be relatively open or closed. Systems are not only about people. For example a motor car might be thought of as a system. However, social systems (ie. those relating to people), can always be accessed at different points. The greater the number of entrance points, the more flexible the system is.

Social systems tend to be interconnected. A dysfunction in any of the systems or subsystems can have knock on effects on other systems or subsystems (eg. individual, family, group, team organisation).

Thus social relationships and behaviour cannot be explained in isolation, but rather, they must be explained with reference to, or within the context of, the relevant systems (ie. no man is an island).

Systems tend to hold themselves in balance or equilibrium, simultaneously moving towards their goal.

Systems can be knocked off balance, or, systems can continue to function in a depressed manner.

There are many factors which can cause imbalances within a system or its breakdown.

The effect can be cumulative. An example of this might be the client who has lost his job. This leads to lack of money, which leads to failure to pay the bills. His morale and self esteem drop. He gets into increased debt; his relationship begins to suffer; his problem solving techniques fail; he enters crisis.

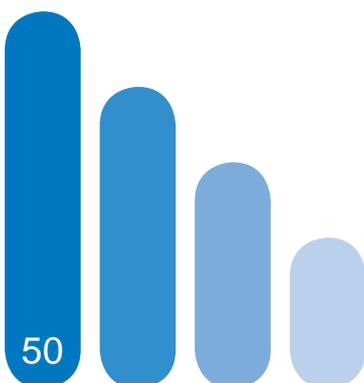
## Technique

Identify and define the relevant social systems. Because systems are interrelated, the starting point does not matter:

Assess their functioning. Identify where the pressures are built up in the systems and subsystems. For example:

- Are there stresses within the family?
- Does the client face eviction because housing benefit did not process his application?
- Is the client in debt because their budgeting skills are poor, or is it because he has neglected to claim the right benefits?
- Is the client's morale so low that he finds it difficult to do what he knows needs to be done?
- Is the client or a member of his family ill? If so what effect is this having on the client and other members of his family, etc.

Identify where to intervene. Set the goal and work out strategies. If the goal is to reduce pressure, then work out how this can be achieved.



## How Systems theory is used in Connexions

Connexions Personal Advisors developed the use of an assessment tool for working with disengaged young people. The assessment aspect of their method of Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review (APIR) draws heavily on systems theory. It is widely used by youth workers and personal advisors to get young people to identify the things that influence them and to discuss their relationship with families and peers. Young people are seen in their wider context and the influence of this context on them is addressed.

## Student case study activity

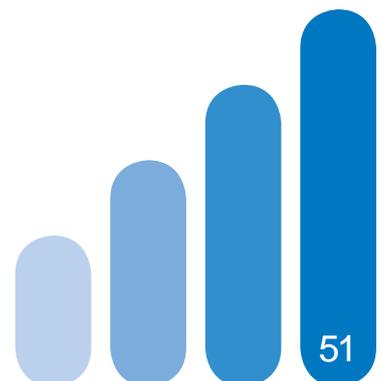
### A systems approach

Imagine you are working in a drug and alcohol rehabilitation project. You are supporting a young man who wishes to stop his misuse of drugs.

- How would you help the young man to identify the factors that influenced his drug taking?
- What skills would you need to use to be effective in this situation?
- What would you need to ensure you didn't do?
- Who else would you need to involve and how would you involve them?

Discuss your answers and then reflect on and discuss what can be learned from this type of work that is relevant to social work practice. Consider:

- What social work roles would be covered in doing this work?
- How does this work relate to the core values of social work?



## Ending the placement

It is hoped that using this resource pack will have enabled practice assessors and students to explore together voluntary sector ethos, values and practice. There is a great deal more information that could be passed onto students and the following section gives links to some of the useful documents available on the internet. It is hoped that if students have started to appreciate the value of work in a range of settings, they will be interested in finding out more.

To ascertain whether a student has gained more insight and understanding about the voluntary sector, it is suggested that you undertake a final reflective discussion.

### Reflective Discussion

#### Is this real social work?

- What knowledge, skills and values has the student developed?
- How transferable are these to statutory social work?
- How different is social work to the work being done by the organisation?
- Has their attitude to the voluntary sector changed in any way – how / why?
- What have they learned that will influence any future practice they may do in statutory settings?
- Is the work of the organisation real social work?

# Resources



## Further useful information

Many voluntary sector organisations are worried that there won't be enough work that links to the key roles of the social worker that students need to demonstrate their competence in. The work of each organisation differs but the table in appendix A suggests some of the generic work that a student can do to meet each of the key roles and gain evidence for the assessment units.

Organisations currently working with social work students have advised that it is easiest to start by looking at all the work being done and then link the work to the National Occupational Standards, rather than trying to link the standards to the work.

## Useful books and reports

Analysing Community Work Its Theory and Practice  
Keith Popple (OU Press, 2000)

Community Work  
Alan Twelvetrees (BASW, 2002)

Voluntary Action  
Barry Knight (Centris, 1993)

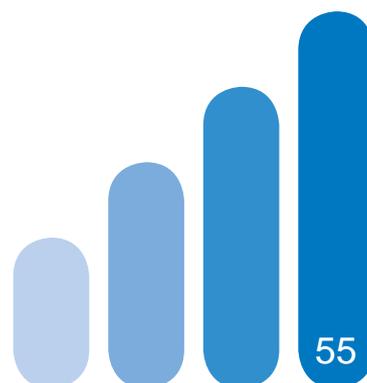
Our Health, Our Care, Our Say – a new direction for community services  
Department of Health January 2006

Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families  
Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and Home Office  
2000

Partnership in Public Services: An Action Plan for 3rd Sector Involvement  
(Cabinet Office, 2007)

Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care  
(HM Government, 2008)

The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery  
A Cross Cutting Review.  
(HM Treasury, Sept 2002)



## Websites

NCVO (The National Council for Voluntary Organisations)

[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/policy](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/policy)

NCVO is a lobbying organisation and represents the views of its members and the wider voluntary sector to government, the European Union and other bodies.

Charity Commission

[www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

The Charity Commission for England and Wales is established by law as the regulator and registrar of charities in England and Wales. Their aim is to provide the best possible regulation of these charities to increase charities' efficiency and effectiveness and public confidence and trust in them.

Office of the Third Sector

[www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector)

As part of the Cabinet Office, the Office of the Third Sector leads work across government to support the environment for a thriving third sector (voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, cooperatives and mutuals), enabling the sector to campaign for change, deliver public services, promote social enterprise and strengthen communities.

Communities and Local Government

[www.communities.gov.uk/communities/thirdsector/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/thirdsector/)

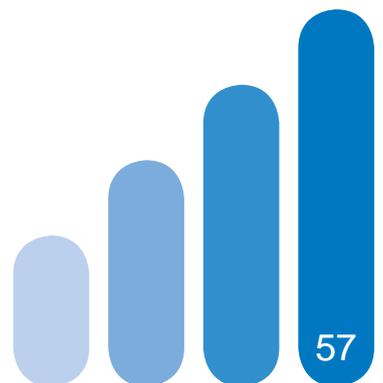
Communities and local government website outlining the government's vision for local communities and the role of the third sector within that.

Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO)

[www.cemvo.org.uk](http://www.cemvo.org.uk)

The council is committed to extending opportunities to people from the most disadvantaged communities in the UK.

# Appendix A



## Appendix A: Social work key roles and the link to work practice opportunities

The 6 key roles of social work are divided into units that the student has to demonstrate competence in. In all there are 21 units and these are each divided into 4-5 criteria. A student needs to show evidence that they are competent against each of these criteria by the end of their social work degree. The full criteria of each of the units will be given in the university handbook

The table below (and on the following pages) suggests some of the activities that a student can be involved in which will help them meet the criteria outlined in each unit.

Key role 1:	Prepare for, and work with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities to assess their needs and circumstances
Unit 1	Prepare for social work contact and involvement
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions / meeting service users and staff through induction</li> <li>• Read policies and procedures</li> <li>• Learn about values and aims / objectives of organisation</li> <li>• Introduce self to key contacts, eg. parents families, social worker, other professionals, etc</li> <li>• Read all relevant files of service users</li> <li>• Shadow staff members</li> <li>• Attend appointments and meetings with service users with the staff members involved</li> <li>• Discuss / learn and understand about any health/safety or risk assessment issues</li> <li>• Undertake casework:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Look at referral forms / read over case notes</li> <li>o Build up service user profile / gather information</li> <li>o Work with a service user to prepare for eg. social work assessment form</li> <li>o Identify who else may be involved eg. carers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Meet staff members to discuss cases and update team members</li> <li>• Arrange meetings with service users</li> <li>• Inform other staff of actions and involvement</li> <li>• Liaise with other professionals eg. social workers by phone, email, etc</li> <li>• Carry out initial assessments and assess needs</li> <li>• Undertake research:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o understand about the local area – schools, voluntary organisations, other agencies</li> <li>o understand the issues involved with the service users</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Attend case reviews / panel meetings e.g. review care plans and set action plans</li> <li>• Write reports and case notes and make recommendations</li> <li>• Update files with new information</li> <li>• Plan individual or group work sessions</li> <li>• Undertake relevant training on the specialisms of the organisation</li> </ul>

Unit 2	Work with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities to help them make informed decisions
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange meetings with service users to introduce yourself, duties, responsibilities, organisations role etc</li> <li>• Write letters / emails / phone call, confirming date, time and venue and purpose of the meeting</li> <li>• Develop relationship with service user to find out their needs and circumstances and assess future needs</li> <li>• Build profile of the service user including: personal details, history, challenges, interventions etc</li> <li>• Take on referrals / casework / key worker role</li> <li>• Update key information needed for self / agency</li> <li>• Arrange and attend crisis intervention meetings</li> <li>• Liaise with social services and other professionals around key work cases and enable service user to understand the process.</li> <li>• Develop supportive relationships with service users families / carers</li> <li>• Set up group work activities to meet needs of groups of service users.</li> <li>• Undertake community development projects</li> <li>• Offer support to individuals in need</li> <li>• Develop links with other professionals</li> <li>• Attend networking events in the community to enable services to be known about and understood</li> <li>• Attend any events involving service users</li> </ul>
Unit 3	Assess needs and options to recommend a course of action
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise assessments – write letters / phone calls to invite for assessment etc</li> <li>• Undertake initial assessment meetings and follow assessment frameworks</li> <li>• Help develop the assessment /goals setting or care planning procedures of the organisation</li> <li>• Input into care plans for service users / undertake care planning for own case load</li> <li>• Undertake risk assessments with service users and staff and continually manage risks involved.</li> <li>• Ongoing assessment of needs and reviewing changing needs with service users.</li> <li>• Work with any families / carers of service users</li> <li>• Understand and follow legal requirements (eg. Child Protection /Mental Health / special needs)</li> <li>• Develop action plans / identify work priorities</li> <li>• Work with supervisor to review cases and possible alternatives for service users</li> <li>• Identify social needs and develop activities to meet needs</li> <li>• Present ideas for new activities to staff meetings</li> </ul>

Key role 2:	Plan, carry out, review and evaluate social work practice, with individuals, families, carers, groups, communities and other professionals
Unit 4	Respond to crisis situations
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing risk assessment and risk management</li> <li>• Understand all organisational emergency procedures</li> <li>• Deal with incidents of ill health – service user or staff</li> <li>• Deal with incidents perceived by a service user as a crisis</li> <li>• Discuss any incidents with supervisor</li> <li>• Understand and follow procedures about referrals to eg. police</li> <li>• Enable service user to understand procedures</li> <li>• Meet service users with any relevant agencies</li> <li>• Undertake rapid intervention work when required and under direction</li> <li>• Develop, support and plan actions to reduce future crises</li> <li>• Shadow other professionals dealing with crisis if appropriate</li> <li>• Learn about what would constitute crisis and how to respond in a restricted environment with minimal time</li> <li>• Learn about incident handling and reporting</li> <li>• Learn about working with confrontation and conflict management</li> <li>• Undertake contingency planning</li> </ul>
Unit 5	Interact with individuals, families, carers, groups and communities to achieve change and development and to improve life opportunities
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to individuals and spend time with them</li> <li>• Build rapport &amp; relationships with the service users, families, carers, and others</li> <li>• Opportunities exist to work with individuals, families and groups to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Promote independence</li> <li>o Promote healthy living</li> <li>o Arrange training in eg. mobility / life skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organise social activities eg. reminiscence activities with the elderly</li> <li>• Find out from service users what would improve the quality of their lives</li> <li>• Escort service users eg. when meeting a professional / attending court / visiting their family</li> <li>• Participate in planning &amp; developing group work and the review of the groups.</li> <li>• Arrange activities that can empower the service user</li> <li>• Discuss key issues + how to problem solve</li> <li>• Provide advocacy / information to service users</li> <li>• Provide / arrange for support to service users including practical support, counselling, advocacy, befriending, mediation, etc</li> <li>• Undertake Keyworking sessions and support service users with daily living skills</li> <li>• Undertake outreach work and liaise with other agencies</li> </ul>
Unit 6	Prepare, produce, implement and evaluate plans with individuals, families, carers, groups, communities and professional colleagues
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to referral forms</li> <li>• Undertake assessment of need of individual service users</li> <li>• Organise initial visits to the project / the service user</li> <li>• Develop care plans or action plans</li> <li>• Review support plans against targeted actions</li> <li>• Follow up on previous actions and evaluate outcomes</li> <li>• Write regular keyworker's reports / report to staff meetings</li> <li>• Input into collective decisions on support planning</li> <li>• Explain plans of action to service users</li> <li>• Working with colleagues and hold regular meetings with all concerned</li> <li>• Assess risks + opportunities with service users</li> <li>• Develop relationships with the multi professionals involved</li> <li>• Follow up decisions made in reviews</li> </ul>

Unit 7	Support the development of networks to meet assessed needs and planned outcomes
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-disciplinary team working</li> <li>• Liaising with other agencies</li> <li>• Refer service users to other organisations</li> <li>• Networking with multi-agency partners / develop formal and informal networks and links</li> <li>• Organise links with health agencies</li> <li>• Look at cultural needs and make appropriate links</li> <li>• Take part in handover meetings with other staff involved</li> <li>• Attend meetings with other agencies to see how the work might overlap</li> <li>• Undertake research into resources available in local area</li> <li>• Liaise with social services to meet changing needs of the individual</li> <li>• Shadow other linked professionals if appropriate</li> </ul>
Unit 8	Work with groups to promote individual growth, development and independence
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn about and understand the structure + purpose of any existing groups</li> <li>• Participate in group support sessions</li> <li>• Help plan group sessions and activities</li> <li>• Meet and consult service users on what development needs they have, draw together ideas and then establish a group where the needs can be met</li> <li>• Work with service user groups in a residential setting eg. organising and chairing residents meetings</li> <li>• Set up new groups where needed</li> <li>• Bring service user groups together with other groups (maybe from different organisations)</li> <li>• Set up a developmental group work programme with service users taking full responsibility for planning activities</li> <li>• Keep everyone involved and communicate what is happening in the group (eg. take minutes and circulate)</li> </ul>
Unit 9	Address behaviour which presents a risk to individuals, families, carers, groups and communities
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake, review and update risk assessments of service users, activities and the environment</li> <li>• Undertake training on and learn about behavioural issues and their causes</li> <li>• Develop trusting relationships where intervention can reduce risk</li> <li>• Deal with challenging behaviour, using support, advice and procedures available</li> <li>• Follow all legal/ethical procedures</li> </ul>

Key role 3: Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances	
Unit 10	Advocate with, and on behalf of, individuals, families, carers, groups and communities
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for service users in order to ensure their needs are met eg. for access to welfare benefits, with courts or other professionals</li> <li>• Support the service user in speaking and informing all involved – social workers, other professionals, next of kin, etc about any changes in the services user’s situation, needs, preferences or service allocation as and when it occurs</li> <li>• Set up activities which enable a service user to identify and express their needs / views</li> <li>• Organise service users or residents meetings.</li> <li>• Allocate responsibilities to a service user to enable them to represent their views and ideas</li> <li>• Use care / action plans to get service user to identify their needs and be involved in meeting them</li> </ul>
Unit 11	Prepare for, and participate in decision making forums
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake Keywork sessions</li> <li>• Set up / participate in residents meeting</li> <li>• Take part in forums which are for consultation and information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Plan a forum</li> <li>o Make decisions about who should attend – ie. professionals</li> <li>o Organise venue, mailouts to clients, plan agenda – ensure there are viable outcomes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Empower user by fully engaging them in the process</li> <li>• Work with users to make decisions</li> <li>• Prepare for review meetings and agree care plans /ensure decisions are made</li> <li>• Attend meetings with groups and agencies and participate in decision making</li> <li>• Be active in local relevant forums and ensure service users needs are on the agenda</li> <li>• Participate in service user forums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Empower service users</li> <li>o Report back on service user issues</li> <li>o Support service users to be heard</li> <li>o Report back on relevant issues</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Key role 4:</b>	<b>Manage risk to individuals, families, carers, groups, communities, self and colleagues</b>
<b>Unit 12</b>	<b>Assess and manage risks to individuals, families, carers, groups and communities</b>
<b>Possible student activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess risks of all activities including trips / residential stays</li> <li>• Teach and support service users to keep their home safe and secure</li> <li>• Ensure risk management of the office environment</li> <li>• Undertake risk assessment in group work – Pre, during and post</li> <li>• Assess the needs / risks of any carer who may need emotional or practical support</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 13</b>	<b>Assess, minimise and manage risk to self and colleagues</b>
<b>Possible student activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and understand all organisations policies and procedures</li> <li>• Undertake training on how to be aware of boundaries and parameters of the work and how to avoid risky behaviour.</li> <li>• Undertake risk assessment training</li> <li>• Know the emergency procedures, who are the first aiders etc</li> <li>• Use supervision to discuss risks and worries about the work</li> <li>• Undertake spot checks to see if risks are being managed</li> <li>• Find out about and use any tools and methods for managing risk in the organisation</li> </ul>

<b>Key role 5:</b>	<b>Manage and be accountable, with supervision and support, for your own social work practice within your organisation</b>
<b>Unit 14</b>	<b>Manage and be accountable for your own work</b>
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use any timesheets or staff monitoring procedures used by the organisation</li> <li>• Agree involvement and rota of attendance and keep to it</li> <li>• Compile daily records of any interactions with service users</li> <li>• Develop and use activity /work plans</li> <li>• Design / use evaluation tools for work undertaken</li> <li>• Ask for feedback from supervisor</li> <li>• Prepare for supervision sessions</li> <li>• Follow through all agreed actions</li> <li>• Write case notes / reports as needed</li> <li>• Ensure all files are up to date</li> <li>• Sign everything as required</li> <li>• Develop effective communication systems</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 15</b>	<b>Contribute to the management of resources and services</b>
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to management decisions through attendance at meetings, discussions in supervision, etc</li> <li>• Take on a caseload</li> <li>• Do presentations at team meetings of things learned on the course or through other training</li> <li>• Ensure all activities are costed and within the budget</li> <li>• Research local resources that could be used by the organisation</li> <li>• Plan special events / trips / activities on behalf of the organisation and find resources for them</li> <li>• Review organisations policies and procedures and help develop them further</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 16</b>	<b>Manage and be accountable for your own work</b>
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage own workload be responsible for own work</li> <li>• Inform colleagues of what has been happening / needs to be done (phone, email, memo, diary, message book, etc)</li> <li>• Update log books / records</li> <li>• Write a monthly progress report</li> <li>• Present work at staff meetings</li> <li>• Write reports for eg. annual report or external publications</li> <li>• Chair and / or record meetings</li> <li>• Organise group meetings / joint supervision if there are other students</li> <li>• Ensure all paperwork relating to the service users is updated and filed correctly</li> <li>• Develop electronic record keeping systems</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 17</b>	<b>Work within multi-disciplinary and multi-organisational teams, networks and systems</b>
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend external meetings</li> <li>• Contribute to / chair meetings</li> <li>• Network with multidisciplinary team members and other agencies (voluntary or statutory)</li> <li>• Input into assessment of service users done by other professionals (visiting GP, OT, therapist, etc)</li> <li>• Find out about local networking meetings and events</li> <li>• Find out about / subscribe to / read relevant email bulletins or magazines</li> </ul>

Key role 6: Demonstrate professional competence in social work practice	
Unit 18	Research, analyse, evaluate, and use current knowledge of best social work practice
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the organisations' development of policy and procedure</li> <li>• Use the internet / course information to find out about current best practice</li> <li>• Attend other organisations doing similar work and provide research report/ paper/notes on what they are doing</li> <li>• Evaluate best practice ideas and their relevance to the organisation</li> <li>• Find out about training courses and opportunities to find out more about subjects / issues</li> <li>• Enable the organisation to tap into publications / internet resources / elearning opportunities, etc</li> <li>• Research current and upcoming legislation and pass on information to the staff team</li> <li>• Give presentations / training at staff meetings</li> <li>• Prepare information leaflets on specific topics</li> <li>• Help the organisation evaluate its work / develop evaluation tools</li> <li>• Undertake questionnaires / interviews with service users</li> </ul>
Unit 19	Work within agreed standards of social work practice and ensure own professional development
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for and attend supervision sessions and use them to reflect on learning and work undertaken</li> <li>• Take part in all team meetings and discussions</li> <li>• Research and explore all learning opportunities and make the most of new possibilities</li> <li>• Evaluate own work through supervision and feedback from staff Report on project success</li> <li>• Share learning and work done with the team and pass on any relevant information / teach others skills learned, etc</li> </ul>
Unit 20	Manage complex ethical issues, dilemmas and conflicts
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn how to handle any potential difficulties with relationships with service users</li> <li>• Discuss possible ethical dilemmas in supervision</li> <li>• Attend inter agency protocol meetings</li> <li>• Explore links with other organisations that may be able to meet a service user's specific needs eg. cultural needs in order to enhance an individual's developmental needs</li> <li>• Learn about relevant legislation and its shortcomings / issues of applying it in practice</li> <li>• Find out about past cases which have become ethical issues for the organisation</li> <li>• Read about practice issues and dilemmas</li> <li>• Explore case studies with the staff team to understand how to respond to different situations</li> </ul>
Unit 21	Contribute to the promotion of best social work practice
Possible student activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute knowledge of best practice to all support / care plans, reviews, assessments, etc</li> <li>• Encourage colleagues to work more effectively by sharing knowledge</li> <li>• Make the organisation aware of any other services that can be called upon as needed</li> <li>• Attend seminars, conferences, training</li> <li>• Undertake peer consultation</li> <li>• Undertake shadowing of a range of other staff and discuss observations</li> <li>• Demonstrate reflection of practice through interaction with colleagues and supervision</li> </ul>

