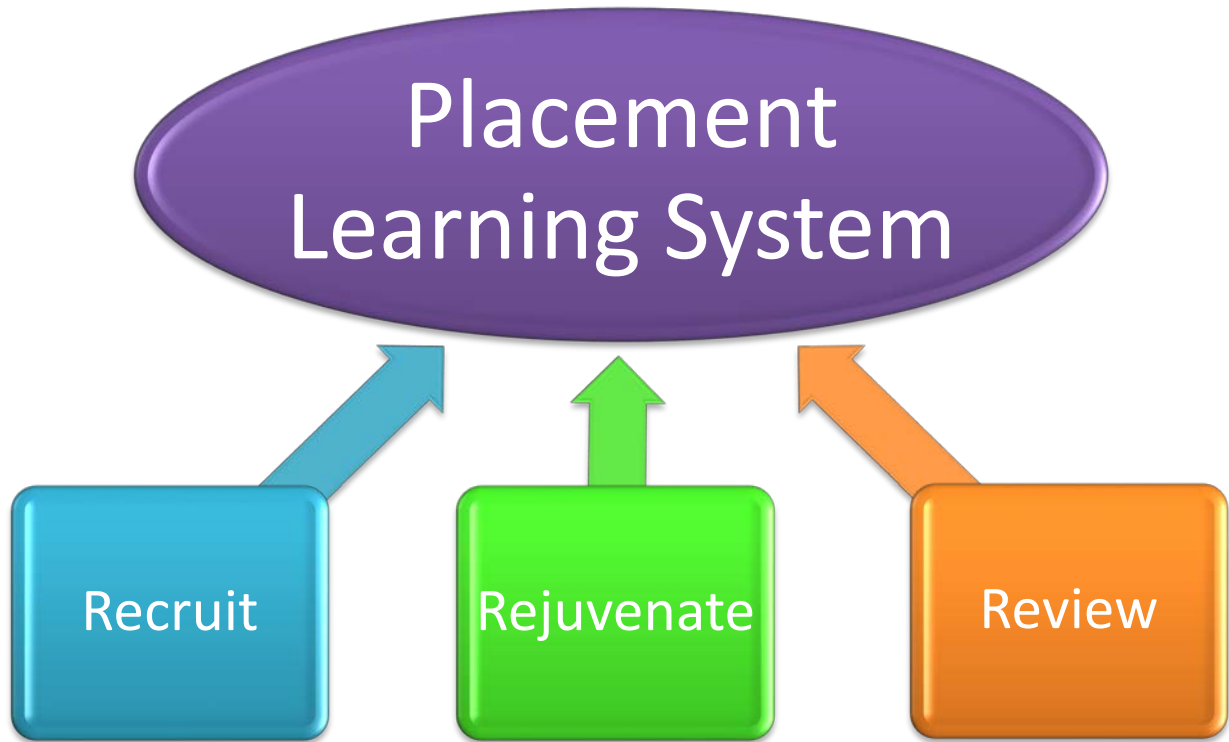


D2N2 Teaching Partnership

Social Work Academy for Excellence



D2N2 Teaching Partnership

October 2017

Produced by:

Partnership Project Manager –

Chris Durkin

Partnership Practice Educator Leads –

Sara-Eden Ludwell, Alma Rapesa, Christine Laycock, Alison Rawlins

Contents

D2N2 Teaching Partnership	2
Introduction of the Placement Learning System (PLS)	3
Placement Learning System model	4
Recruit, Rejuvenate, Review: <i>A brief overview of the key elements</i>	6
Placement learning system and the links to the <i>Recruitment</i> elements	8
University process – Placement matching and allocation process for Social Work students	8
Agency process.....	9
Why it's so important to have the right information - Student Profiles.....	10
The importance of the placement allocation meetings.....	11
Journey to Practice Educator training	12
We need to get it right - Matching Practice Educators and students	14
Placement learning system and the links to the <i>Rejuvenation</i> elements	15
Two student placements	15
Pre placement meeting.....	17
Midpoint review - keeping everything on track.....	18
Student support.....	19
Placement learning system and the links to the <i>Review</i> elements	20
Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (QAPL)	20
Currency	21
Appendices.....	22
Appendix A	23
Checklist for the Pre-Placement meeting.....	23

D2N2 Teaching Partnership

The D₂N₂ Partnership guarantees to provide all students on courses at both Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and the University of Nottingham (UoN) with two statutory placements in their preferred area of specialism. These placements will be provided by Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire, Derby City, Derbyshire, Framework and Nottinghamshire NHS Trust.

Both higher education institutions work collaboratively with agencies so that students go out at different times in the academic year and utilise the same e-portfolio for assessing students on placements. This means that the D₂N₂ partnership will be able to offer the same statutory placements that will be accessed for different periods by students from University of Nottingham (UoN) and Nottingham Trent University (NTU) with the added benefits of:

- Social work teams having a regular student presence and being familiar with the assessment requirements for placement learning.
- Placements that could straddle more than one setting for statutory work can be consolidated over longer periods giving students across the Universities more consistent experiences of placement quality.
- New Practice Educators (PE) can be supported by more experienced colleagues.

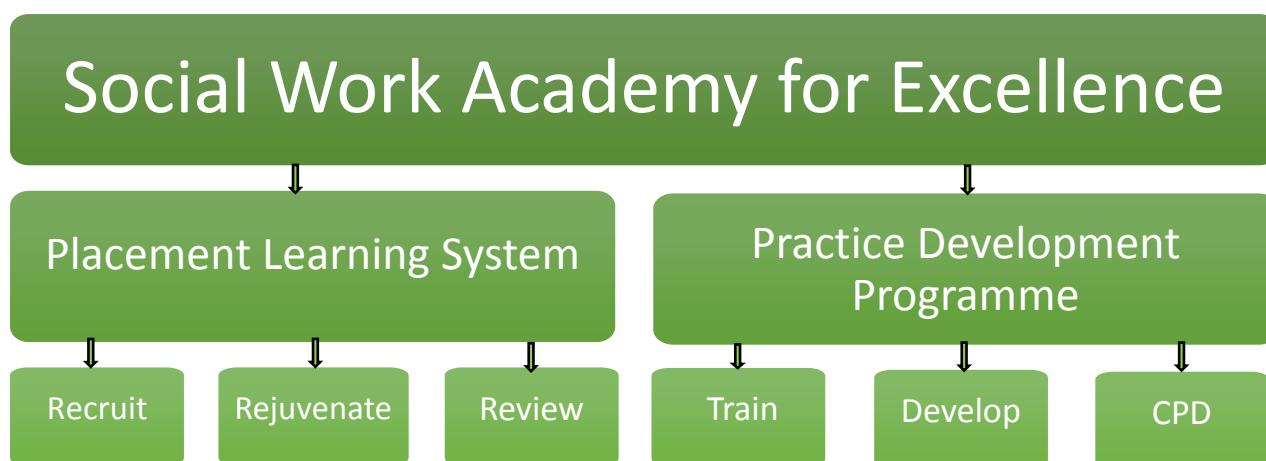
Introduction of the Placement Learning System (PLS)

The Social Work Academy for Excellence has the vision of an integrated system that can be utilised for improving the process for student placements and practice education. The partnership working between everyone who is part of this system is vital in order for the successful implementation of the Placement Learning System (Model 1).

The aim of this document is to outline a proposal for the Placement Learning System (PLS) that would run parallel to the Practice Development Programme. It will improve the provision of practice learning opportunities for social work students and assist practice educators when offering a placement, ensuring there is support from the team and ultimately the organisation as a whole within D2N2 Partnership. The overall aim is to provide a better quality service for service users and carers.

Under the PLS model greater emphasis is placed on:

- Having a clear protocol to place students within the organisation
- Provide accurate information on their profiles to enable potential practice educator to make a decisions to offer a placement or not
- Agency representatives and university staff work closely to provide the right placement for the student
- Increasing the number of shadowing opportunities, skills days and placement's
- Increasing the number of work based supervisors , practice educators and practice mentor assessors
- Ensuring the matching process of students meets their learning needs
- Ensuring the social work students know what area of social work they want to go into for their placement
- Creating a clear process for the pre placement meeting
- Ensuring the key components of the placement are understood by all concerned
- Making sure the organisation are prepared to support students whilst on placement
- The Quality Assurance of Practice Learning process to be fully implemented to support everyone involved in the student process
- Students are supported to progress with their career progression within the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
- The practice educators maintain a high level of profession standards



(Model 1)

Placement Learning System model

It's the responsibility of the organisation to ensure students are supported in the best way possible whilst on placement. There are traditional placements where a student is placed with a singleton practice educator or work based supervisor supported by an offsite / long arm practice educator. Or a more creative approach could be to utilise student units or split placements. The Placement Learning System (PLS) is a holistic approach to placements, practice education and practice learning. The role of the Partnership Practice Educator Leads (PPELs) are to act as spokes to support this system. They are underpinning the implementation of all aspects of the PLS. This is in conjunction with all partner agencies, support from Principal Social Workers, senior practitioners, and academic staff. The PLS is an approach to support and develop students whilst on placement and to improve the overall role of the practice educator. It is underpinned by the organisation, managers and teams. There are 4 main areas:

- High quality placements will be accessed by students from both universities but at different times in an academic year.
- Placement opportunities can remain *traditional* or be more creative and straddle more than one setting or be within a student unit.
- High quality placements means placements that are supported by the organisations and team of child or adult/mental health practitioners (acting as work based supervisors) as well as the practice educators. Placements should also be committed to improving their evidence based practice and research through engagement with academic staff. Everyone involved in the PLS wants to provide excellent outcomes from service users.
- Practice educators and students are supported through out the placement process.

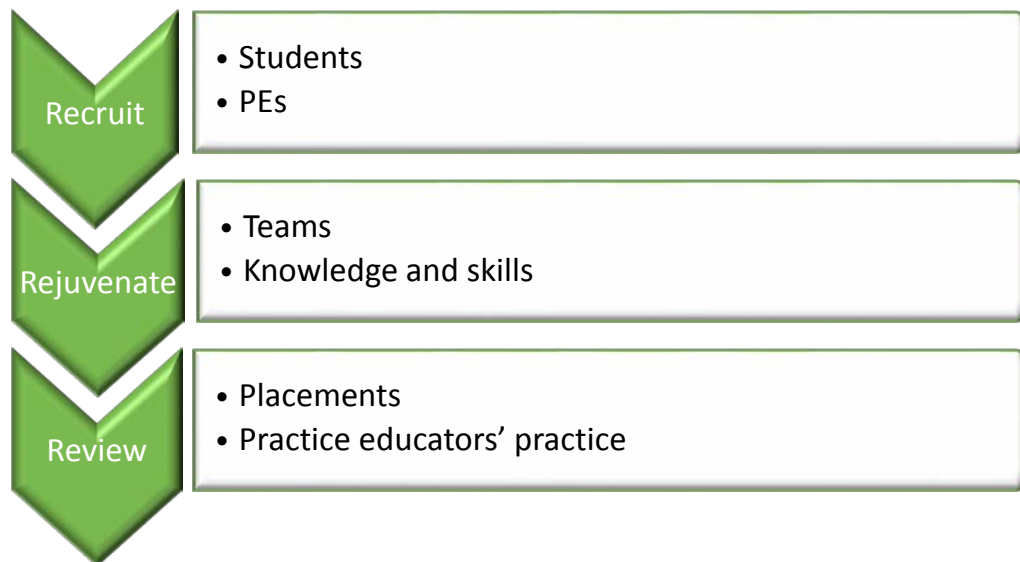
By moving to the PLS will provide the opportunity to improve three aspects.

Recruit, Rejuvenate and Review. (Model 2)

The PLS wants to **recruit** students into placements that meet their needs and offers the best opportunities to enhance their learning experience. The PLS wants to recruit more practice educators to provide placement opportunities to students. This will then provide these practice educators the opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge, which can assist in future career choices. This experience will embed their supervisory and management skills so that they become prepared for management roles.

The PLS will **rejuvenate** teams so they embrace having the opportunity to have a student in the team and recognise the positivity they can bring. Social workers within the teams will have to ensure their knowledge and skills offer a contemporary approach in order to meet the needs of the student social workers.

The PLS will **review** the placements that the students have been on to ensure it is right for the next generation of students coming through to training. Also ensuring that the practice educators are providing the right support, supervision, placement experience etc. will form part of the review process. For practice educators, there is a need to establish how their experience of the placement was too. Collating qualitative data is very important in the process.



(Model 2)

Recruit, Rejuvenate, Review: A brief overview of the key elements

Recruit

Protocols for placing students

Clear protocols need to be in place within each aspect of the partnership. This is key to providing the student's placements in a timely fashion. Protocols need to be in place at the universities and within each agency. Support from senior managers will be vital in promoting the importance of student placements and what they can bring to the team. Organisations need to promote the idea of the student being part of a system, in which everyone has a part to play.

Student profiles

Receiving student profiles from the university is the starting point of the student journey. Making sure all the relevant information is present, is vital to prevent initial problems occurring. The students need to highlight anything that they feel is relevant to the placement, but also any aspects that might have an impact e.g. a disability, carer responsibility, previously been a service user etc.

Placement Allocation meetings

This is an essential meeting for all staff involved in placing students within their organisations. Having detailed, but concise information from the student, will help with planning how to best meet their needs from their potential placement. Practice educators will indicate to the placement coordinator if they can offer a placement

Practice Educator training

The pool of practice educators needs to increase. The practice educator course needs to ensure the social workers fully understand the journey of the student and what their role is within that. They need to have a good grasp of how theory links to practice and the core elements to make them more confident to practice as a social worker. Embedding the service user perspective into the course means practice educators will learn how to teach students to work in an anti-oppressive manner and how to use service user feedback to improve their practice. It's vital to understand the process that social workers will go through to make the decision to become a practice educator

Matching PEs and students

Getting the right placement for the student is crucial. This is where they will develop their key skills and knowledge, whilst drawing on their theoretical knowledge from university. Equally, we need to ensure the practice educator is able to meet the needs of the student. The matching process is the foundation for a successful placement.

Rejuvenate

Two student placements

All of the students within the teaching partnership must have two statutory placements. This will help to raise their level of competence and confidence with their transition from student to Newly Qualified Social Worker.

Pre placement meetings

The approach to the learning agreement meeting appears to be understood by all concerned. It's the pre placement meeting that needs to have a more robust and consistent approach. These meetings need to be made a more formal part of the process. A standard approach from potential placement providers needs to be adhered to. This is where the student needs to demonstrate to the practice educator (work based supervisors) that they have a vested interest in the potential placement. The team and the manager need to be part of this process.

Midpoint review

Students need to understand that at any point the placement could require an action plan, concerns meeting or termination of the placement. The midpoint review meeting is an ideal period, within the placement, to discuss any potential difficulties the student is having. The team and manager will also have a part to play in assisting the student to remain on track with their placement.

Student support

The organisation and the whole team needs to embrace having a student placed with them. They should welcome their enthusiasm, commitment and their enquiring minds. Students ask questions, come with fresh perspective and are eager to learn, so this should be embraced by the team and utilised to bring about positive change. It's an ideal opportunity, with the support from the team for the student to apply for jobs within the placing agency. The student would have developed skills and knowledge to help them prepare as a newly qualified social worker.

Review

Quality Assurance of Practice Learning

The Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (QAPL) isn't capturing the essence of what HEIs and agencies want. There needs to be a way in which we can collate data, utilise it and inform how we review the placement learning system for future cohorts.

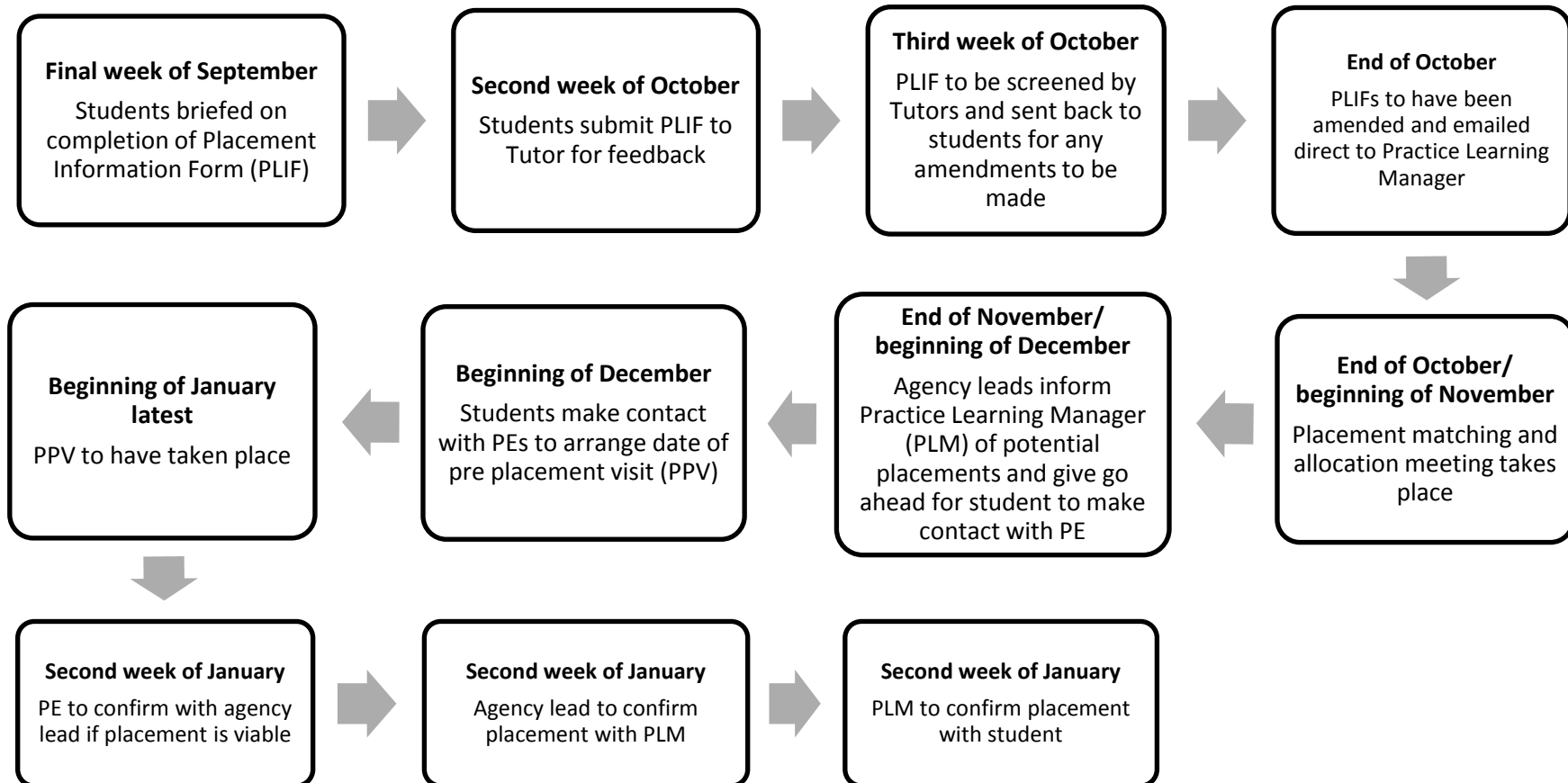
Currency

We need to ensure that practice educators maintain high standards when offering placements to their students. The currency process will be utilised to keep the quality of our practice educators at a level that HEIs will know they are maintaining placements of excellence.

Placement learning system and the links to the Recruitment elements

University process – Placement matching and allocation process for Social Work students

The university implement the first part of the PLS. It is so important that everyone fully understands the process of placements. The university ensure that they fully brief the students about the importance of the placement profile and the allocation process. The student understands they cannot contact social workers directly to arrange, shadowing, skills days or placements.



(Prepared by Yvonne Galea of the University of Nottingham & Barry Fearnley of Nottingham Trent University)

Agency process

The placement learning system is supported by senior leaders and managers. Therefore this makes this system an organisational responsibility. Building on the protocol from the university each agency needs to ensure there is a clear protocol implemented so the student placement process has a seamless approach.

There will be social workers undertaking the practice educator course. These are the primary group that should be allocated a student. They've already had manager support to undertake the course and understand that a student needs to be placed with them in order to complete the course.

Team managers are in a very good position to know what capacity the practice educators have to offer a placement to a student. There are a few aspects that the manager needs to take into consideration when a student placement is required.

These are:-

- Which practice educator had a student last time. A fair process is to ensure that all practice educators have a student, so the students need to be rotated around the practice educators.
- Has the practice educator got capacity to take a student at the present time. Caseloads fluctuate, people maybe on an action plan, maybe just returned after a period of long term sickness etc. It might not be in the practice educators best interest to offer a placement.
- Does the practice educator need a student in order to maintain their currency. This discussion would've been raised in supervision and if they need a student to maintain their currency, then this needs to be planned accordingly.

Therefore, as each placement coordinator has the student profiles they should ensure that the profiles go to the team managers to share with the practice educators and work based supervisors in their teams. A discussion can take place between the relevant parties and a decision can be reached.

The work based supervisor and /or practice educator would then contact the placement coordinator to inform them they want to set up a pre placement meeting. The coordinator will then send the name and contact details of the worker to the university, who will ask the student to make contact with the worker.

This approach will benefit the students as the practice educator clearly has the support of their manager to undertake this role. Therefore, the social worker will be able to fully commit to the placement and the student.

Why it's so important to have the right information - Student Profiles

The PLS relies on the information that students provide in order to start the process. Students need to know this is the only information that practice educators have to go on, when considering offering a placement. It's not just about providing information about previous experience, expectations of placements etc., it's also about making sure the information is grammatically correct. This is the students' time to shine and they need to make a good impression.

Practice educators are very busy social workers. They will be looking for a student who has made the effort to check their profiles before submitting it. It's the attention to detail that stands out as well as the information contained within the profile.

The information that the student will provide will be personal information including: their name, ethnicity, address, car driver, anything that might impact on the placement, disability and which service user group they would like to work with. There should then be an overview of the modules the student has undertaken, their previous work experience and if this is the final placement it will also outline their first placement experience.

The student needs to be succinct, but ensure they provide a really good insight into previous experiences, and future areas to develop.



It's the information that is put into this profile that can prompt the practice educator to offer a pre placement visit. The practice educator may be undecided about the student based on the information. The pre placement meeting gives them the opportunity to meet, face to face, with the student. They could have the pertinent discussions that would enable them to make the offer of a placement.

The practice educator needs to look at the profile from several perspectives:

- Will their team be able to meet the needs of the student?
- Can the student benefit from a placement with them?
- The potential of the student (as these are social workers in training and not the finished article); and
- Will the personal aspects outlined by the student be able to be accommodated adequately?

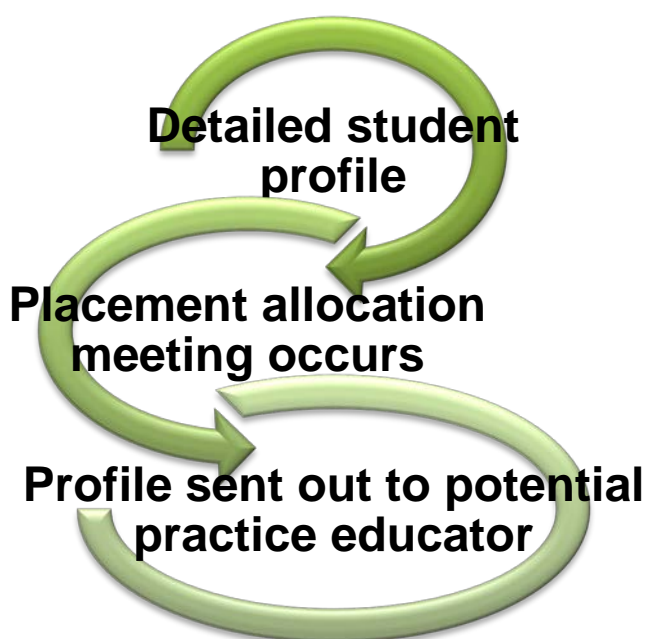
The importance of the placement allocation meetings

The universities will invite all partner agencies to attend the placement allocation meetings.

All agencies involved with the partnership will be present to have an in-depth discussion about each student. All will know, from a work force planning perspective, how many students they require for their agency. The number of students would have been suggested within the Teaching Partnership.

Having all partners present provides a vital forum to go through each students' profile and discuss which agency would be best placed to offer the student a placement. All aspects mentioned on the form must be considered when placing the student.

Most of the students who are discussed in this forum require a placement for the first time. However there could be students who require a repeat placement. It isn't appropriate for them to return to the agency where they were issues. The agencies will discuss what placement could be offered in order to allow the student to have another attempt in a different agency, but similar setting.



There could also be students who had their placement deferred for various reasons. Again, a discussion would take place to find the most suitable placement for them.

Practice educators and work based supervisors need to plan for when the next cohort of students will come out on placement. They need to be supported by their manager to undertake this role and prepare the team that they will be offering a placement to a student.

Journey to Practice Educator training

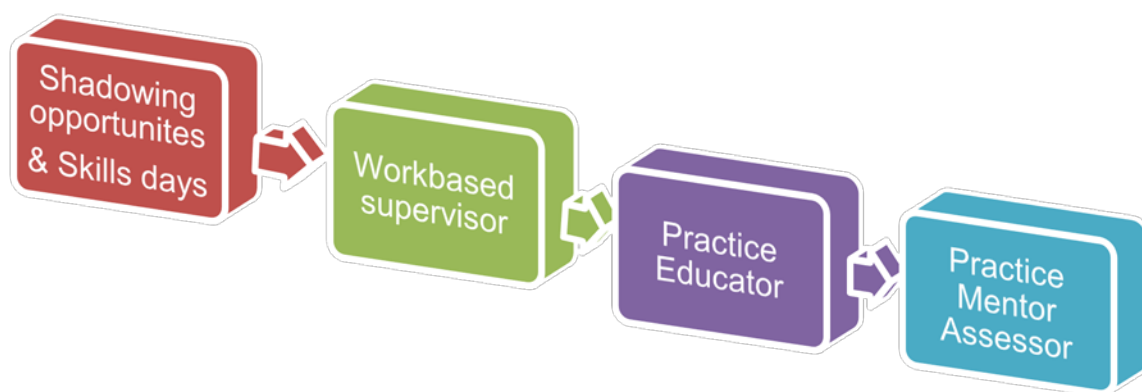
Shadowing days are requirements of the universities. These days can be considered beneficial for the students and our social workers.

Of course for the student this may be the first time they have the opportunity to see the *day in the life of a social worker*. Spending this time with the social worker will provide them with an initial foundation to their social work journey.

For the social worker this gives them the opportunity to oversee someone for a very short period of time and to see if they enjoy this role. This provides them with an initial foundation to their practice educator journey.

The social worker should prepare a day that provides the student with a good overview of the type of work they do within that team. Of course they can only give a snippet of what they get involved in, but it should be enough to set the scene.

The student should show real enthusiasm for this experience and engage well in the day. They should think about how they prepare for the day and what they hope to gain from their time there. The foundation has been laid and the student needs to think about their next step in building their social work experience. The skills days again provide great opportunities for the student and the social worker offering these days.



The student should reflect on their shadowing days and prepare again for the 10 days. This is where they can start to develop the skills and knowledge required for their social work role.

The social worker will be overseeing a student for a longer period of time and should be able to decide if they want to pursue the next part of the practice educator journey.

The role of work based supervisor is a great way for social workers to engage in the practice educator process, but not be fully responsible for the placement. They will engage in the work based supervisor training and meet the day to day requirements of the student.

This really is the final stepping stone to becoming a practice educator. It will probably be after this experience that the social worker will progress onto the practice educator course, Stage 1 and then Stage 2.

Why is practice education and the training so important? It helps to bridge the essence of learning to the realities of practice.

The organisation, teams and individuals all have a responsibility to ensure placements are made available to students working towards their professional qualification. For the social worker they take on a different role and become an educator. For the student they are immersed in social work and consolidate their learning from university within this workplace.

The student needs this arena of practice education to ensure their development towards professional competence. As the social worker goes through the process of practice education, it assists with their continuous professional development.

Central to the student's placement are the practice elements, but equally important is the supervision process. Both being able to reflect on practice, situations, cases etc. will increase knowledge and skills. The student and practice educator will both be learning, from different perspectives and gain some insight into their skills. Again, both will be able to consolidate and verify how they are developing and what they are learning.

Students and practice educators will be acquiring new skills and knowledge and should embrace the learning that each is going through. The ultimate aim for both student and practice educator is to ensure outcomes for service users will be the focus and priority. Both student and practice educator need to have support forums and briefings during the placement.

Overseeing the placement and supporting both student and practice educator is the practice mentor assessor. These are practice educators who have reached their Practice Educator Stage 2 status. Their role is extremely important to ensure the practice educator is enabling the student's learning and are the gate keepers to the profession.

We need to get it right - Matching Practice Educators and students

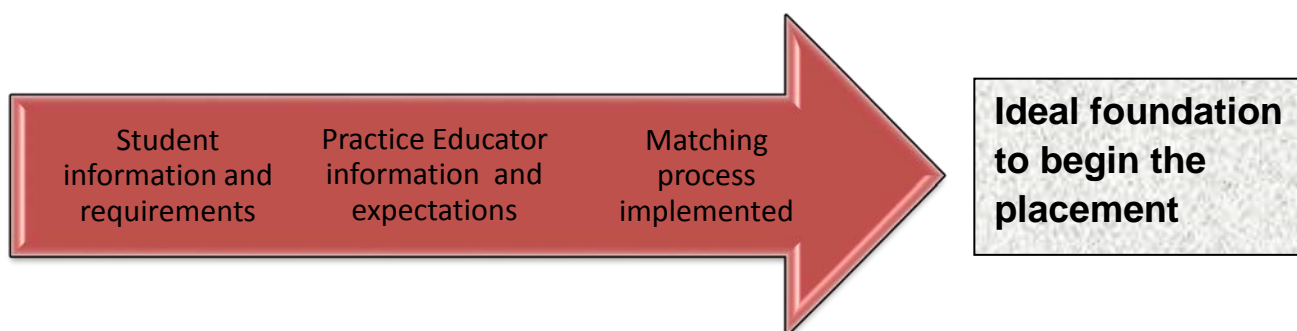
It's crucial that students are placed in the right setting. The student's profile provides the practice educator with information about the type of placement they want, knowledge and skills they want to develop. The service user group is essential to take into consideration too. In so many cases, both students and practice educators experience difficulties as there is an immediate block to engaging in the placement as it isn't the right service user area.

Other aspects that need to be taken into consideration when matching a student to a placement is the distance to the placement and whether they have access to a car. Some of the geographical areas that the agencies cover are extremely large. The students need to be prepared to travel to placements within the Teaching Partnership.

There will be social workers who are training to be Practice Educators (PE). These will be going through Stage 1 or 2 of the practice educator course. There may be situations where it isn't appropriate to allocate a student to a PE 1. This might be because the student had concerns in their first placement and they must repeat the process. The panel may have stated that the student will require an experienced practice educator, therefore someone who is training will not be suitable for this particular placement.

The practice educator may have a preference for a specific student. This could be someone who is at a certain level in their training. Maybe after having second year students for a couple of years they request to have a final year student. Some teams also state because of the nature of the work that they undertake e.g. a court team, they would expect to have a final year student. No one wants to set a student up to fail therefore it's about being realistic about whether a certain team would be more suitable to a final year student, rather than someone on their first placement.

On the other side of this, the student may highlight having a lot of experience with a certain service user group e.g. working with adults. Practice educators would welcome the opportunity to work with this student, as they will have a good foundation to build on. The student however might state they want to work in a children setting. Practice educators, have to accept that the student is bringing with them past experiences and it's their role to ensure they can draw upon these past experiences and utilise them as transferable skills.

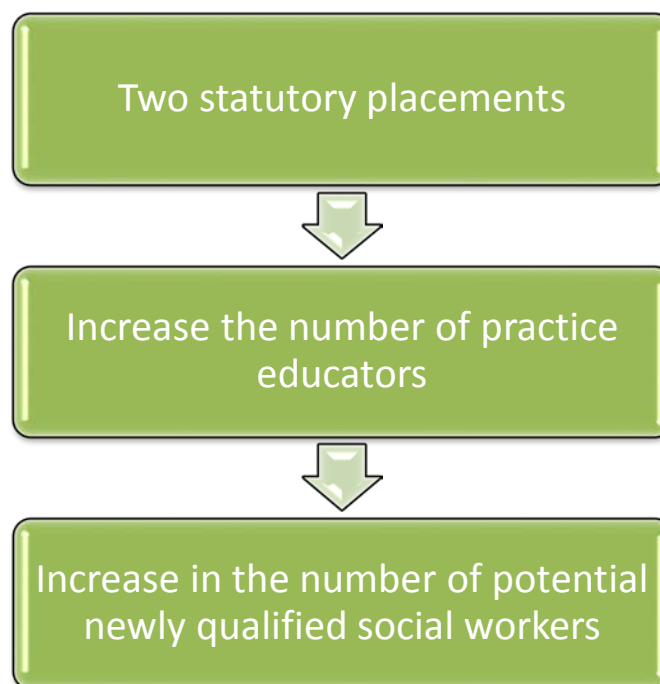


Placement learning system and the links to the *Rejuvenation* elements

Two student placements

The Teaching Partnership has guaranteed that all the students within the partnership will have two statutory placements. The placement learning system is supported by the senior managers therefore the implementation of the two statutory placements will always come to fruition.

Of course, having these two statutory placements means there is an impact on the workforce:



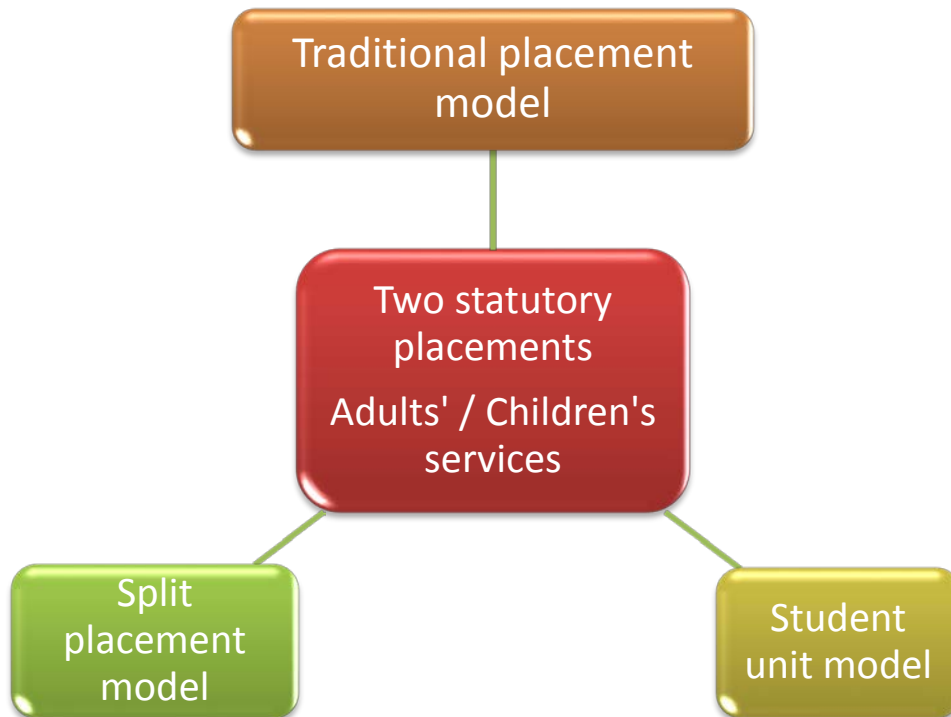
More practice educators will be required to provide these placements. Having the through put from social workers offering shadowing, skills days and being work based supervisors, are the natural pool of people to become the practice educators. Training more practice educators, requires more practice mentor assessors to assess the practice educators in training. Both students and social workers benefit from having the two statutory placements.

The social workers are developing new skills that will be utilised for future career development and promotion.

The students develop the knowledge and skills required by social workers. This should give them the confidence to apply for a post within the agency and become the future workforce. Training the newly qualified social workers, by providing a robust assessed and supported year in employment, will provide the workforce with their future experienced social workers.

There could be placements that would suit some students. These are outside of the “traditional” placements and the way they have been set up. There are two types:-

Student units and split placements



Student units are beneficial to both student and practice educator. Offering a hub approach these would involve one dedicated and experienced practice educator overseeing a number of student social workers at the same time. Supervision is still undertaken on a one-to-one basis, but there is also scope for group supervision. This will be another skill that the practice educator will be developing.

The split placement wouldn't suit all students or practice educators. Therefore, careful planning would be required as to how this would work. What teams could be used, where the two bases would be, similar casework, etc. would have to be considered.

Pre placement meeting

Before the start of a placement, the social work student will be invited to meet with their practice educator. This meeting isn't as formal as the learning agreement meeting, but it is a very important meeting within the whole process. The pre placement meeting has often been an aspect that is overlooked. Whilst everyone knows that it needs to be undertaken, there isn't a consistent approach.

The student and practice educator must both prepare for this meeting, understand the importance of this meeting and how it is organised. The student needs to attend the pre placement meeting with positivity and be open minded.

It's important that the pre placement meeting is utilised to confirm it's an appropriate match. Also discussions can take place to highlight areas to be developed and areas of strength.

During this meeting, the practice educator and the student will discuss the learning opportunities the placement will offer the student's learning needs, skills and strengths. There should also be a discussion about practical aspects such as working hours, study days, dress code etc.

It is at this point that the manager and the team need to show their commitment to the student and the how the placement is going to be rolled out. The student is coming into an organisation that needs to have a culture of promoting and embracing student placements. The student can be assured that they will belong to an organisation that supports, not only them, but the important role of the practice educator.

The placement learning system is committed to promoting social work values and anti-oppressive practice. Both students and practice educators will ensure that these are integral to their practice and the placement. The student must be made aware that the skills and knowledge they will be building on will ultimately benefit our service users. The pre placement meeting is the first step to ensure that both student and practice educator can discuss how they will meet these important aspects. The experiences students will have on placement will challenge their values and beliefs. The ability to remain open minded will enable them to develop into flexible practitioners. They will develop the confidence to ask questions and recognise the key aspects of social practice.

Midpoint review - keeping everything on track

Both student and practice educator recognise the importance of this milestone. The pre placement meeting offers the chance for all parties to establish *if* this will meet everyone's needs. The agreement meeting is more formal and sets out the *how* the placement will meet everyone's needs. The midpoint review meeting is a reflection on the first half of the placement and to plan for the rest of the placement.

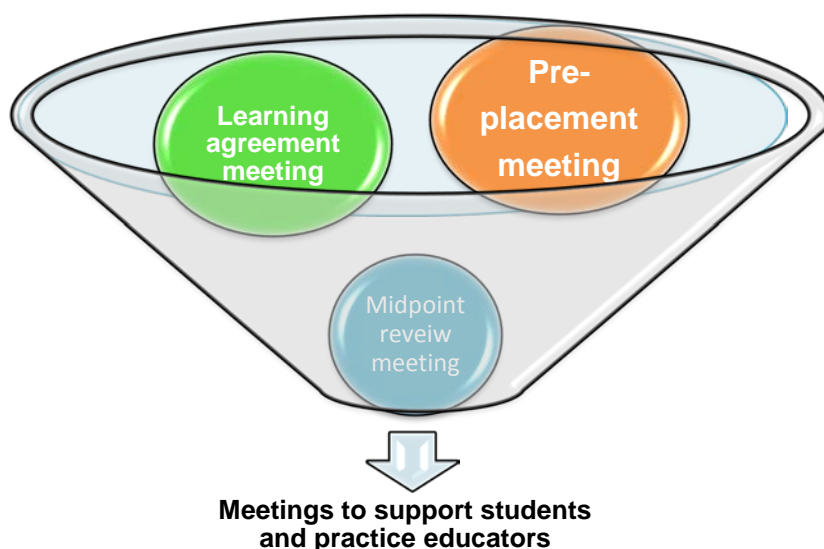
All of these meetings are very important, but have a different onus on the outcomes. The mid-point review will have the student, their tutor and the practice educator present. Sometimes there could be a team manager present. All will discuss what has been achieved, skills developed and knowledge acquired. Values and anti-oppressive practice should be integral to the student's learning. Also, linking theory to practice is vital for the student to understand what is framing their practice.

This meeting can be utilised to ensure the practice educator has met all the requirements e.g. offering a weekly supervisor session, supporting the student to stay on track with their portfolio, recognising professional and personal values, to work in an anti-oppressive manner, linking theory to practice, and the importance of research etc.

The student will be able to reflect and discuss their experiences up until this point. They should be given the opportunity to hear the positive aspects of their placement, but also given constructive criticism.

A very difficult aspect for both student and practice educator is when there are concerns that are raised. Concerns can be raised at any point during the placement by either party. The universities clearly outline what procedures to follow if there are concerns, but this meeting can be utilised to have formal discussions.

With the implementation of the new quality assurance of practice learning process, the placement learning system has created an opportunity for issues to be picked up in a more robust manner and dealt with in a timely fashion.



Student support

The student needs to know that they will be supported within their placement opportunity. There are several key aspects that will help the student to build the foundations of how to practice as a social worker.

The aspect of looking after yourself and thinking how you work with others. Building resilience is a key aspect that will help with all areas of social work. The organisation, team managers and practice educators need to ensure that students recognise their emotional and physical attributes and these are in a good condition. It's important that the student feels able to go and speak to someone at work who will actively listen to them.

Also, reflecting on what has brought the student into a career in social work can be a powerful tool. Often students can become overwhelmed with all of the learning that needs to be undertaken, so they should be given the opportunity to talk about why they came into this profession to help them remain focused.

Time management is another aspect that needs to be developed very quickly in order to succeed in this very busy profession. It isn't possible to give people more time, but showing them ways to manage their time more effectively will assist them in the work place. Having to stay on top of cases, as well as time to complete the portfolio, can be difficult. One technique such as making a list to prioritise the most important tasks can really help (but remember time needs to be booked in the diary to make the list!). Working out how long it will take to complete the piece of work and mark this off in a diary is another method.

The environment that the organisation sets up for students should be nurturing and allow students to feel confident to be able to ask questions. If they don't understand they should feel they can ask. It's important that they ask their practice educators for help and support throughout the placement, as they are still learning.

Ultimately knowing how to support students has an impact on both students and the practice educators. The practice educator will be reassured that the commitment they've made to their student will provide them with every opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge. The student has such a fantastic experience that they want to carry on with this journey and apply for a post within the agency. The student should be supported with applying for posts, interview techniques etc. The practice educator will actively encourage this as the student will be transitioning from a student to newly qualified social worker (NQSW). The placement learning system wants to feed into the Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE) and provide the work force with social workers for the future.

Placement learning system and the links to the Review elements

Quality Assurance of Practice Learning (QAPL)

The PLS has led to a review of the QAPL process. This is to ensure that the evaluation of placements are fit for purpose, provide quality placements and provide meaningful information for students, agencies and HEI's.

The process now consists of 3 or 4 parts with the initial stage being the Placement Audit. The Placement Audit form should be completed by the Placement Co-Ordinators within the agency setting and submitted to the relevant HEI for monitoring and auditing purposes. The audit will provide both agencies and the HEIs with an overview of the quality of the placement and appropriate opportunities and support available to students.

The Quality Assurance Placement Monitoring Process (QAPMP) involves completing new forms. These are:-

- *Week Four Placement Monitoring Form (Student and PE and Work based Supervisor where applicable)*

The introduction of the placement monitoring form at 4 weeks will provide an opportunity to ensure the quality of the placements, the student is being supported and with an appropriate workload to meet their learning needs and level of study, and work towards resolving any placement issues at an earlier stage.

- *Midway Placement Monitoring form (Student only – if applicable)*

The introduction of the midway placement monitoring form is to address / review any issues that have been identified at the 4 week stage or since the 4 week stage. (Review of issues / concerns raised at the 4 week stage should have been reviewed prior to the midway meeting as per HEI policies. Midway monitoring ensures all parties are updated).

This should be completed by the HEI tutor in consultation with the student prior to the midway review meeting and discussed during the meeting. If there are no issues / concerns this midway monitoring form does not require completion. The midway review meeting will acknowledge this and a record will be made on the midway review form.

- *End of placement monitoring form (Student and PE)*

The new end placement form replaces the existing QAPL evaluation form. It has been designed to allow more meaningful feedback from students and practice educators. It will inform placements going forward, identify opportunities and learning needs.

(Information taken from the QAPL working party)

Currency

It's important that practice educators maintain standards with regards to this role. Both practice educators and student will benefit from having these standards. They provide a framework that PEs need to work within, therefore students will have placements that are of a high standard.

The Practice Educators Professional Standards (PEPS) were developed by the College of Social Work. According to the PEPS, Practice Educators (PEs) need to undertake the PE role regularly. The recommendation is that it's at least every two years to maintain their PE Status.

It is acknowledged that some PEs may not be able to fulfil this requirement. This could be due to various issues e.g. personal circumstances or work pressures. It could also be due to a change of role or organisational constraints. There are often teams that have several PEs and it may not be possible for each team member to undertake the PE role within the 2 year period.

PEPS are still the guiding standards for practice education and should be adhered to, until they are formally reviewed or changed by a designated body (that has a mandate for carrying out revision of PEPS).

The standards do refer to other 'relevant experience in practice education' and therefore individual PEs could engage in other aspects of practice learning and enabling learning of others that would demonstrate they've utilised their knowledge and skills and therefore maintained their currency.

A proposal is required for reviewing PE currency in situations where PEs have not undertaken the PE role within the 2 year period. Under that proposal, PEs who have not provided a PE or enabling learning role for longer than 2 years would be asked to complete a very short form outlining 2 areas:

- how have they supported their CPD since they last undertook the practice educator role; and
- any areas of practice in relation to practice education they feel they need to develop further / refresh.

The forms that are submitted are discussed by the relevant panel. They would recommend necessary actions, including:

- undertaking certain workshops or briefings;
- providing a student placement opportunity; or
- having a direct observation of their practice with the student etc.

Appendices

Appendix A

Checklist for the Pre-Placement meeting

Student's preparation - The student should arrive on time, be dressed appropriately and be enthusiastic about the placement.

Student interest in the placement – It's important that the student has thought about and shares their learning objectives and goals they hope to achieve in this setting.

Practice educator's preparation - The PE should inform the team that the student is coming to look round. They should have a list of relevant questions they want to ask the student.

Overview of the placement setting – The practice educator should explain the type of work undertaken, the team's role and the learning opportunities available

Career in social work – Students and Practice Educators should discuss what has motivated them to choose a career in social work. Students should discuss their short and long term goals as a social worker.

Previous work or volunteering experience – Students should discuss prior work and volunteer experiences. It's important to discuss how the skills and knowledge gained will become transferable skills in the placement setting. Practice Educators should discuss their work history and social work experiences. It will be of interest to the student also if they say what they enjoy about their current role and why they became a practice educator.

Strengths and areas to develop – Students should discuss their areas of strength and describe areas where they believe they need to develop during the placement.

Supervision – Practice Educators should outline the expectations and frequency of supervision.

Student's personal circumstances – The student should discuss any personal circumstances which might affect the placement. If these aren't discussed they might cause problems during the placement. Aspects might include life experiences that might affect the placement, religious or cultural aspects, disability, or other employment.