



Work Experience in Health and Social Care 6

Getting to know your unit

Assessment

You will be assessed by a series of assignments set by your tutor.

If you are thinking about a career in health and social care, work experience is a good way of seeing if it is right for you by making you aware of the tasks and activities you may be required to do. In this unit, you will reflect on and develop the personal attributes and skills you need to work in this sector, and learn about the expectations of different professional roles. You will also develop a plan to support your learning while on a work experience placement, and record and monitor your progress in a work experience log. This is a practical unit that will teach you the benefits of work experience and provide a placement opportunity in which you can develop, apply and reflect on knowledge and skills in a real-life situation.

How you will be assessed

This unit is assessed through a series of internally assessed tasks set by your tutor and based on evidence you will collect in your work experience log. Throughout this unit, you will find assessment practices that will help you prepare for your final assessment. These do not contribute towards your final grade but give you an opportunity to practise so it is important that you complete them to the best of your ability. Your tutor can then advise you on how to do even better in your final assessment.

The final assessment set by your tutor will consist of several tasks based on your work experience placement, designed to meet the criteria in the assessment criteria table.

The following are examples of the sort of activities you can expect.

- ▶ Writing a letter applying for a work experience placement, in which you analyse and justify how work experience supports the development of your skills, attributes, understanding and knowledge, as preparation for work in the health and social care sector.
- ▶ Producing an action plan for your work experience, accompanied by a commentary explaining and assessing how well the plan provides support for work experience and your own learning and development.
- ▶ Preparing a report on your responsibilities and how you demonstrated and selected different work-related skills while on work experience.
- ▶ Writing a review of your work experience in which you reflect on the skills you developed and how it has contributed to your personal and professional development.

Assessment criteria

This table shows what you must do in order to achieve a **Pass**, **Merit** or **Distinction** grade, and where you can find activities to help you.

Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim A Examine the benefits of work experience in health and social care for own learning and development		
A.P1 Explain how work experience can support the development of own professional skills and personal attributes for work in the health and social care sector. Assessment practice 6.1	A.M1 Analyse how work experience can provide support in gaining a realistic understanding of the health and social care sector. Assessment practice 6.1	AB.D1 Justify the benefits of preparation in supporting own understanding of the expectations of work experience. Assessment practice 6.2
A.P2 Discuss ways in which work experience can inform own career choices and help prepare for employment in the health and social care sector. Assessment practice 6.1		
Learning aim B Develop a work experience plan to support own learning and development		
B.P3 Explain own responsibilities and limitations on work experience placement. Assessment practice 6.2	B.M2 Assess the importance of own work experience plan to support own learning and development. Assessment practice 6.2	
B.P4 Explain how to meet own specific personal and professional goals while on work placement. Assessment practice 6.2		
Learning aim C Carry out work experience tasks to meet set objectives		
C.P5 Demonstrate work-related skills to meet set objectives for work experience tasks. Assessment practice 6.3	C.M3 Demonstrate work-related skills with confidence and proficiency to meet objectives in different situations. Assessment practice 6.3	C.D2 Demonstrate work-related skills proficiently, taking the initiative to carry out activities according to own responsibilities and setting's procedures and selecting appropriate skills and techniques for different situations. Assessment practice 6.3
C.P6 Discuss ways in which work shadowing and observation can support development of own skills while on work placement. Assessment practice 6.3		
Learning aim D Reflect on how work experience influences own personal and professional development		
D.P7 Review own strengths and areas for development in response to feedback on work experience placement. Assessment practice 6.4	D.M4 Assess how self-reflection can contribute to personal and professional development in work experience placement. Assessment practice 6.4	D.D3 Justify how planning for and reflecting on skills developed during own work experience placement have informed own future plans for personal and professional development. Assessment practice 6.4
D.P8 Produce a personal and professional development plan which identifies improvements to own skills for future development. Assessment practice 6.4		

Getting started

Ask a partner to list your strengths and weaknesses. Do the same for them. Swap lists and see if you agree with them. Are there any that are a surprise to you? Why? Reflect on what you have learned about yourself and how this may help in the future. Keep the list for future reference.



A

Examine the benefits of work experience in health and social care for own learning and development

Developing skills and attributes

The **skills** needed to provide health and social care include many that you cannot easily learn at college, such as the ability to undertake practical tasks. These are usually learned in the workplace. Work experience is, therefore, crucial not only in giving you a taste of the job so you can decide whether it would suit you but also in helping you start to develop the skills you will need. It also allows you to see whether you have the personal **attributes** you need to work in this sector.

Key terms

Skill – the ability or talent to do something well.

Attribute – a quality which contributes to who you are, helps form your personality.

Work experience evidence log

Part 1: You will be expected to collect evidence of the skills and attributes you demonstrate during your work experience placement, such as tutor observations, work placement supervisor witness statements, reflective accounts and diary entries, and to record where this evidence is located in your portfolio in Part 1 of your work experience log. This record is self-assessed and must be signed off by your work placement supervisor and/or your tutor.

Part 2: You will also need to record how you demonstrate technical skills, and some specific areas of skills such as communication, data handling, personal responsibility, teamwork and interpersonal skills in Part 2.

Part 3: This focuses specifically on the work skills of health and safety, and of communicating professionally.

Part 4: This part of the log asks for evidence of your reflective practice, based on your developing skills and attributes.

Part 5: This section is a tutor observational visit report, assessing the level of all your skills and attributes and suggesting areas for development.

Part 6: This section is similar to Part 5 but is completed by your work placement supervisor.

► **Table 6.1** Some of the skills and attributes needed to work in the health and social care sector

Skills	Attributes
Communication	Compassion
Interpersonal	Positivity
Organisational	Patience
Technical/practical	Professionalism
Teamwork	Empathy
Literacy	Reliability
Numeracy	Honesty
Digital literacy	Integrity
Problem-solving	Hard working
Decision-making	Supportive
Competency	Professional
Reflective	Confident
Employability	Responsible

Reflecting on own skills and attributes and areas for development

Important preparation for work experience is to **reflect** on your own skills and attributes, and areas for development. To do this successfully, you need reflective skills. Reflective practice involves consciously thinking about an event or incident in order to learn from it. If something has gone well, you can reflect on it to see what you did, why it was a success, and use what you have learned to repeat the success in the future. If something has not gone as well as you would have liked, you can think about why this was so that you can improve in future. Reflection also helps you to understand why things are done in a certain way. For example, if you are on work experience in a primary school you may see a learning mentor spend 10 minutes at the start of each day with a young child with behavioural difficulties. Why spend a short period of time every day with the child instead of a whole hour on one day each week? Why at the start of the day instead of later in the day? Such reflection would lead you to realise that this practice calms the child down at the start of each day, reminding them how to behave and why they should behave, and does not allow them to forget – as a meeting only once a week would. The child is also likely to be calmer and more receptive at the start rather than the end of the day.

Reflect

Think about working with either young children or older people. Look at the skills and attributes in Table 6.1 and add any more you can think of. Do you have those skills and attributes? Refer back to the list of your strengths and weaknesses you generated. Identify three areas where you feel you need to improve. These are called areas for development.

Key term

Reflect – look back on actions and events to learn from them.

Developing professionalism

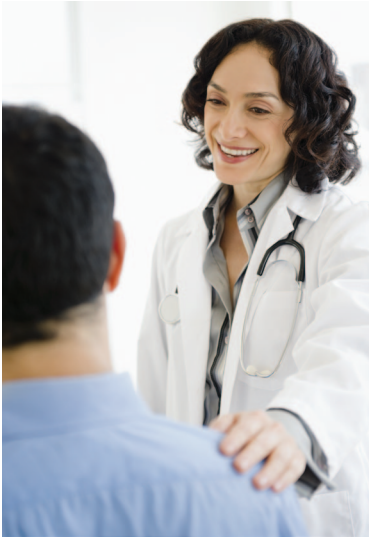
To be professional means to comply with the standards set by the workplace and by regulatory bodies. This will include punctuality, dressing appropriately, finishing tasks to a high standard, finishing tasks on time, acting responsibly, being prepared for meetings, treating others with respect, regular attendance, doing what you say you will do to the best of your ability, listening carefully and following procedures and policies. You may have some of these skills already but will develop them further on work experience, learning from the example set by those you work with.

Communication and interpersonal skills

Communication skills include listening, speaking, non-verbal messages and writing, be it with a pen and paper or electronically. They allow you to exchange information with others.

Good communication skills are vital for working in health and social care as they help you to:

- ▶ develop positive relationships with the people using the services and with their families and friends, so you can understand and meet their needs
- ▶ develop positive relationships with work colleagues and other professionals
- ▶ share information with people using the services, by providing and receiving information
- ▶ report on the work you do with people.



- ▶ How can you tell that the service provider in this photo has good interpersonal skills?

Link

You can learn more about communication in *Unit 10: Sociological Perspectives*, and in *Unit 5: Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs*, learning aim A. Other skills and attributes are also covered in *Unit 5*, learning aim A.

Interpersonal skills are those you use to interact and communicate successfully with others, face to face. This includes not just what is said but also how it is said and the non-verbal messages you send. This might be through tone of voice or body language, including facial expressions, posture and gestures. Even the way you dress communicates a message to others in a room.

Case study

First day of work experience



Abby has just returned home from her first day on work experience at a residential home for older people. She is exhausted from rushing around all day, and has found some of the residents quite hard to cope with but she has enjoyed herself. She spent quite a long time with Mildred, who is 93 years old, partially-sighted and very forgetful, as she has dementia. Mildred remembers words but often says them in the wrong order so that sentences make no sense. Abby was asked to take her

from her own room to the dining room, sit with her to make sure that she ate and then take her into the lounge and encourage her to join in with the armchair aerobics activity. Because of Mildred's dementia Abby had to find other ways to communicate with her.

Check your knowledge

- 1 What skills will Abby have had to use to help her meet Mildred's needs?
- 2 What attributes will Abby have needed when dealing with Mildred?
- 3 How might Abby have communicated with Mildred?
- 4 Why does it matter that Mildred joins in with activities even though, due to her dementia, she might not remember doing so afterwards?

Organisational skills

Time management

Good time management allows you to finish tasks and feel in control, rather than being stressed and worried. Good time management includes prioritising tasks and making sure you have breaks to relax, which will make you more effective. If your work experience involves administration in health and social care, you may receive emails. It is important, where possible, to deal with them as soon as you open them so that you do not miss something that needs dealing with urgently and so they do not build up.

It is also important to either do one thing at a time and see it through, or to look for tasks that can be combined. For example, you may need to speak to a particular person at your work experience placement about a number of different things. Make a list of everything you need to ask them so you do not have to keep going back to the same person. This is a waste of their time because they are being continually interrupted, and of your time in going to and fro multiple times.

Prioritising tasks

Prioritising tasks means completing those tasks which are most important first. You can deal with a task efficiently by completing it well but it may be that you could have used your time more effectively by identifying the tasks which needed completing first before tackling any task.

A simple way to do this is to write a list of tasks and divide them into categories, maybe using highlighter pens to colour code them based on traffic lights:

- ▶ **green** needs doing straight away, so high importance and top of your to-do list
- ▶ **amber** needs doing later today or tomorrow, so medium importance and in the middle of your to-do list
- ▶ **red** needs doing in the next few days, so low importance and bottom of your to-do list.

Another way is to divide tasks into four, as shown in Table 6.2. Although you are unlikely to use this approach on work experience it is a useful tool in day-to-day life and in your future working life.

▶ **Table 6.2** Categorising priorities

	Urgent	Not
Important	<p style="text-align: center;">Important and urgent Do it now</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical emergencies • Important meetings • Project deadlines • Crises 	<p style="text-align: center;">Important but not urgent Decide when to do it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship building • Health and exercise • Preparation/Planning/Prevention • Personal growth • Training
Not Important	<p style="text-align: center;">Urgent and not important Delegate it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions • Unimportant emails, mail and phone calls • Some meetings • Minor problems 	<p style="text-align: center;">Not important and not urgent Do not do it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time wasting • Trivia such as gossip • Tasks to make yourself look busy • Distractions

Reflect

List what you did yesterday and reflect on your time management. For example, did you not do something you intended to? Why not? Do you complete tasks such as homework assignments the moment you get them? Do you have to be reminded or do them at the last minute? Do you tend to complete the easiest, hardest or most boring task first? What has this shown you about yourself? How could you better manage your time?



PAUSE POINT

Can you explain why it is important to be able to reflect on your own skills and attributes? Do you find this easy to do?

Hint

Write a list of what you should do and ways in which you should behave to show professionalism.

Extend

Prioritisation – how can a task be important/not urgent? Give an example. What might happen if you do not do these tasks?

Technical skills

Data handling

Data means any item of information, in whatever form it is presented. To be of use information has to be gathered and recorded in a systematic manner. This is called data handling. Data needs to be put in its proper place in its proper format and must be accurate, so it is accessible to, and useful for, other service providers who need it. You should never, for example, make notes about a service user's needs and store them in your pocket.

Different service providers will have different systems for data handling. You will be told how your work experience setting does this during your induction. They will also have policies and procedures in place and codes of practice written by regulatory bodies, such as the Care Quality Commission, for you to read and adhere to. Data can be as simple as a name, date of birth and address but it can also include tables, graphs, and images, such as scans.

Using specialist equipment

Specialist equipment may be needed to meet the needs of service users, such as a hoist used to lift an older, less mobile person. You will see such equipment in use at your work experience placement but will not be allowed to use it, except to assist a service provider who is using it. You may be allowed to use other equipment, such as thermometers, but only under supervision. If there is specialist equipment that you are allowed to use, your supervisor should make sure that you are properly trained to do so, and it is vital that you then follow both verbal and written instructions when using it. In the workplace, service providers are expected to keep up to date with developments in specialist equipment.



- ▶ Which health and social care settings do you think would use hoists such as these?

Key term

Team – a group of people working towards the same goal.

Teamwork skills

Teamwork is crucial when working in health and social care to ensure that both service users and providers get the care and support they need. Service providers share resources and work together. It is important to develop good relationships on your work placement, by being friendly, respectful and helpful. **Team** members need to be able to trust each other, with each person having a clear role within the team and using effective communication techniques. This is as important for teams who work together every day in a setting such as a care home as it is for teams who may only see each other occasionally, such as in medical or community care.

Discussion

In a small group think of a team, either one you have all been part of or a successful team that you all know of, such as a Premier League football team. Discuss and list what makes the team successful. Write and practise a role play demonstrating the difference between good and poor teamwork. Conclude with a memorable way of remembering skills needed for successful teamwork.

Confidence and personal responsibility

- ▶ **Confidence** is not something that can be learned but is a positive state of mind. You can boost your confidence by thinking positively, having an 'I can' attitude, focusing on the things you know you do well and making sure you have a good network of people who will support you. If you prepare for, and start, your work experience properly by improving your knowledge, researching the placement and the work they do, and asking for help politely and respectfully when needed, the service providers and users will respond positively to you. This will increase your confidence. Sometimes you will, for example, have a problem to solve or be left with time on your hands if plans change. If you are confident and try to come up with an idea of what you could do to solve the problem or fill the time, and ask first, your supervisor will be impressed that you have used your **initiative**.
- ▶ You are **responsible** for your actions. You have a **personal responsibility** to complete the work experience to the best of your ability, in such a way that you do what is expected of you, help the service users and do not create problems or extra work for the other service providers. It is important to complete any task assigned to you. If you leave something incomplete, someone else will have to finish it for you. This will cause irritation and make you look unprofessional. It will also affect the service users, leaving them feeling unsupported. You could even cause harm to your colleagues or to service users, if, for example, you leave something on the floor after an activity and cause an accident. Part of your personal responsibility is to be professional. If, for example, your supervisor gives you supportive criticism, accept it in the way it was meant and learn from it. If you do not understand, politely ask for the reason.

Key terms

Confidence – how you feel about your ability to perform certain roles or tasks.

Initiative – doing something to solve a problem before others do.

Responsible – a duty you are required or expected to do because it is morally right or legally required.

Personal responsibility – by choosing their own actions a person is **accountable** for them.

Accountable – required to explain actions or decisions to someone.



- ▶ Does this learner look confident and professional?

Ability to link theory to practice

Your work experience will be your first chance to put what you have learned in the classroom into practice. This may be through:

- ▶ better understanding how to cope with a small child who is feeling insecure on their first day at nursery and wants their mum
- ▶ dealing with a young person who is angry and uncooperative, but was abused as a child
- ▶ interacting with an older person who is bad tempered and ungrateful, because they are frustrated with knowing that they are losing control over their own life and body.

Knowing the theory for a service user's behaviour will make it easier for you to stay calm and be patient.

II PAUSE POINT

Can you explain what the benefits of work experience in health and social care are for your own learning and development?

Hint

Draw a concept map about skills and attributes.

Extend

One attribute is confidence. What are the benefits of being confident? How may being over-confident lead to problems?

Clarifying expectations for employment in health and social care

Key terms

Diversity – variety or range.

Culture – the beliefs, language, styles of dress, ways of cooking, religion, ways of behaving etc, shared by a particular group of people.

Beliefs – strongly held opinions stored in the subconscious mind.

Respecting diversity and equality

Diversity

To respect **diversity** is to value the differences between people, such as **cultures, beliefs**, age, gender and disability. If you respect the diversity of the other service providers and the service users at your work experience placement, you will be able to learn about them, or from them, understand them and help meet the needs of those you are caring for. It is a legal requirement for all health and social care providers to respect and value all individuals, irrespective of their religious or cultural beliefs, attitudes or other differences. A team of service providers who have different interests and skills is more likely to be able to handle the range of tasks required when helping an individual, and the team will enjoy working together. By valuing diversity you can be a useful member of that team.

Equality

In the health and social care sector, equality means everyone having equal access to the services they need and receiving a service of equal quality that meets their personal needs, no matter where they live or how they live their lives. This is not the same as everyone receiving the same service. For example, everyone has the right to register with a doctor but a seriously ill person will need more of that doctor's time. You will find that treating people as individuals, by taking into account their different beliefs and abilities, is crucial when caring for others. You should acknowledge an individual's personal beliefs, even if you do not share them. If a person's religious belief means they need to wear a particular item of clothing, then you must allow them to do so. By doing so you are showing respect and making them feel valued as an individual.

Link

Unit 5: Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs, learning aim A, also looks at diversity and equality.

For more information about confidentiality, refer to Unit 5: Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs sections B1, D3 and D4 and Unit 7: Principles of Safe Practice in Health and Social Care section A2.

Respecting confidentiality and dignity

Workers in health and social care have a duty of confidentiality that protects the rights of individuals. This means keeping information **confidential** by not sharing information about individuals without their knowledge and agreement, even with service users' friends, family or other individuals. On your work placement you should never:

- ▶ discuss one individual with another
- ▶ discuss matters relating to service users outside the care setting, or in a public place where you might be overheard
- ▶ share written information without permission
- ▶ leave records, in any form, insecurely stored
- ▶ leave records that are in use unattended, where they may be read by unauthorised people.

Maintaining confidentiality also **safeguards** service users. If, for example, you put a photo on any form of social media of a child who has been taken away from their abusive parents and adopted, those parents may discover the child's whereabouts. This would not only cause a great deal of distress to the new parents and the child, but would also get you and your work placement managers into a great deal of trouble.

All health and social care settings have procedures in place with regard to breaching confidentiality that must be followed. You need to read these carefully and, if in any doubt, ask your supervisor for clarification and advice.

It is very important that you protect the **dignity** of those in your care. For example, if a child wets themselves you should take them away quietly to help them get changed, without drawing attention to the situation, so the child is not made to feel embarrassed and ashamed in front of their friends. If an older person wants the independence of doing a task themselves, you can respect their dignity by recognising their ability to do this, even though they may take a long time to complete the task.

Understanding health, safety and security

On work experience, you have a legal responsibility to be aware of your own and others' safety. For example, if you are working in a nursery or a residential care home and leave the door open or unlocked, a child could wander out and come to harm, or cause harm to others. You need to be clear about the limits of what you are, and are not, allowed to do as you are not employed as a member of staff. You are there to learn. Your work placement supervisor will tell you what you can do. It is important that you do not do anything without your supervisor's permission, for example taking the bedside off an older person's bed, which has been put there to stop them falling out of bed.

Every service provider, or someone like you on work placement, has a legal responsibility to safeguard the service users in their care and to make sure that the service users are both physically and emotionally safe. Along with the other service providers, you will

Key terms

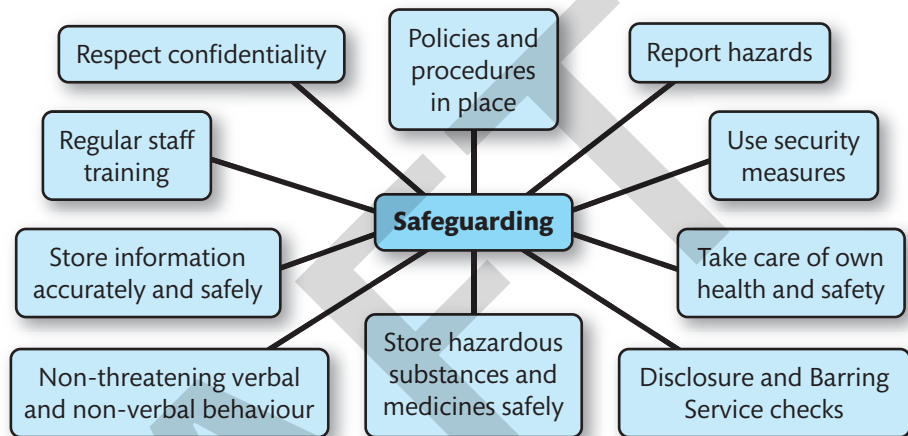
Confidential – information that is secret and should not be shared without permission.

Safeguard – protect from harm.

Dignity – worthy of respect, a pride in oneself.

be asked to sign in and out of your work placement. This is so that the manager knows who is on the premises in the event of an incident, such as a fire. It also means that any unauthorised person who has no business to be there can be turned away.

You have a responsibility to behave in such a way that service users do not feel threatened or intimidated by you, for example by speaking in a gentle voice with a non-aggressive tone. If you spot a hazard that could potentially cause an accident, such as a curled up rug or anything else that could trip someone up, or a wet floor, or if you see someone harming someone else, you should report it to a supervisor straight away. If you do not follow safeguarding procedures you will be breaking the law.



► **Figure 6.1** Can you think of any other aspects of safeguarding?

Understanding and applying care values

Care values are standards of behaviour used by health and social care service providers. They underpin the principles on which service providers base their work. The NHS care values are shown below and are used at all levels of care and work in the NHS. When you are at a work experience placement, you need to ask your supervisor to explain the care values used in that care setting.

► **Table 6.3** NHS core care values

NHS values	What will they do to apply that care value?
Working together for patients	Do everything in the interest of patients with a view to providing services to meet local need.
Respect and dignity	Value and respect different needs and aspirations when designing and delivering services and treat all, whether service user, carer or member of staff, with respect and dignity.
Commitment to quality of care	Provide the highest standards of high-quality, safe and effective care.
Compassion	Treat all with sensitivity and kindness.
Improving lives	Improve both short- and long-term health and wellbeing of service users through excellent care.
Everyone counts	Treat everyone with equal respect and as being of equal importance, and use resources fairly for those most in need.

Research

Undertake research to find out the care values used in three other health and social care settings, including at least one social care setting. Compare them with the NHS care values by creating a table that shows the values for each setting. How similar are they? Which are on all the lists?

Preparation for employment in the sector

Work experience is invaluable preparation for working in the health and social care sector because it gives you the opportunity to:

- ▶ experience care work and gain some understanding of what is involved in caring for others
- ▶ practise the skills you have learned at college with real service providers and users
- ▶ learn new skills
- ▶ assess your own skills and attributes, and areas for development
- ▶ explore different areas of work in this sector to help you decide which areas you would or would not like to work in
- ▶ gain skills, knowledge and confidence to help you apply, and interview, for a job in the sector.

You can further prepare by researching different jobs online, or gain extra work experience by volunteering to help or getting a weekend or holiday job in a local health or social care setting.



PAUSE POINT

What are your expectations for employment in health and social care?

Hint

Draw a spider diagram to show the different expectations for employment in health and social care.

Extend

Why is it important to safeguard your own health and safety when caring for others?

Exploring career options

When selecting your work experience placement you need to consider factors such as your future career aspirations, where you can realistically travel to from where you live or who you could stay with if it is too far to travel, which area of health and social care you are most interested in, whether you prefer working in groups or alone, and whether you want to interact with service users or work in administration. You also need to decide what type of setting you prefer to work in and which age group and group of service users you would like to work with.

Working in different settings

Residential care

Residential care homes for older people are for service users who either can no longer live at home because they need support with personal care, such as washing, dressing, preparing meals, getting in and out of bed and staying safe, and management of any medicine, or for those who choose to live somewhere with more company and support, maybe after the death of their partner. Residential care homes are staffed 24 hours a day and different activities are offered to keep the residents active, both physically and intellectually. If you decide to do your work experience in a residential care home, you will need to like working with older people, have patience and a good sense of humour and be happy to chat with the residents.

There are also residential care homes for children whose families cannot look after them, maybe due to disability, complex health needs, severe learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

Hospital

There are many more jobs in a hospital than those of doctors and nurses. In fact there are at least 350 different roles such as healthcare assistants, clerical staff, engineers and cooks. Working in a hospital means that you will need to be prepared for some upsetting experiences.

If you apply to do your work experience in a hospital, you could apply for a clinical placement. In this type of placement you will be taught to do practical tasks, such as taking measurements of blood pressure and temperature, and washing patients. This will always be under the supervision of an experienced member of staff.

Hospitals are open 24 hours a day but not all departments are open all of that time. For example, you could apply for a non-clinical placement to develop your office and administrative skills, and work in a team that supports clinical services.

Working with different age groups and service users

Children with special needs

Most children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are taught in mainstream schools with extra support from teaching assistants. Those with more severe needs are taught in special schools, which are better equipped and where the teaching staff have been specially trained to deal with these difficulties. If you want to work with children with learning disabilities, it is important to be patient and to interact with the child rather than ignoring them and speaking to others about them. You will need to be observant, consistent, positive and use the child's preferred method of communication. You will also need to be firm and prepared to help with the child's personal needs.

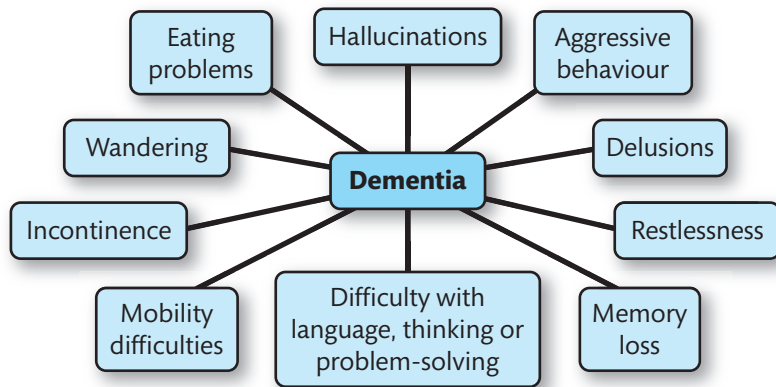
Older people with dementia

Dementia is the word for a group of symptoms caused by brain cells no longer working properly. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia. Dementia is **progressive** with, as yet, no cure. It affects a person's mental function and its early signs are difficulty in remembering words, disorientation, problems with everyday tasks, like forgetting how to make a cup of tea, and personality changes. Symptoms develop gradually, so ways can be found to cope with them, but eventually a person with dementia will present with some or all of the problems shown in Figure 6.2. People with dementia are cared for either in hospitals and care homes or in their own homes. In 2014, the Alzheimer's Society predicted that there would be 850,000 people with dementia in the UK by 2015, and estimated that this would rise to one million by 2025.

When caring for a person with dementia, it is important that you treat them with respect and consult them about their own care. They should not be excluded from any services because of their condition and should be kept as physically and mentally fit as possible, eating a healthy and balanced diet. If they feel better, they will enjoy life more. If you are helping them to dress, it is important to let them keep their own style to help preserve their identity. You will need to be patient, sensitive and tactful when helping them.

Key term

Progressive – symptoms will gradually get worse.



► **Figure 6.2** Do you know anyone with dementia? Do you recognise any of these symptoms?

Discussion

Print out the key dementia statistics from the Alzheimer's Society website (www.alzheimers.org.uk). In a small group of two or three, discuss the implications of these statistics for the UK. How does your group feel this situation could be dealt with? Produce a leaflet to share your ideas with the rest of your class.

Sources of information about careers in health and social care

Useful sources of information about careers in health and social care include:

- Online sources. There are many websites containing information about careers in health and social care. For example, The National Careers Service website. This site covers a wide range of careers, including information such as job profiles, work activities, working hours and conditions, and much more. Using a search engine, such as Google, to look at careers in health and social care generates many pages of websites, with the most widely used being at the top of the list.
- On the high street you can visit organisations such as recruitment agencies, Career Connect and Connexions, which offer careers information, advice, support and guidance for young people. For a list of these centres in your local area, use a search engine and go to websites such as Yell, where you can search for careers advice in your town. Wigan, for example, has a Skills Shop that offers careers advice in Wigan, and Wigan Council offers appointments through schools and colleges to discuss careers advice.

Research

Think of a career in health and social care that you may be interested in pursuing when you leave college. Research that career and produce a presentation based on your findings.

Using work experience to inform career choices, confirm ideas or consider alternative options

Your work experience should give you the opportunity to work with a health and social care service provider in an area that you may be interested in for your future career. You will complete your placement in one or more settings. By observing service

providers at work you will gain an understanding of their roles and responsibilities. You will also be taught how to complete certain tasks and will be allowed to tackle some of them under supervision, as well as practise using, and developing, your skills in a real-life situation.

This experience will either confirm that this is the career choice you want to make or lead you to feel that it is not right for you, and that you need to consider alternative options, maybe in a different area of health or social care.

Assessment practice 6.1

A.P1

A.P2

A.M1

Write a letter of application to a health and social care setting that you are considering for your work experience placement. This might be a care home, day care centre, nursing home, hospital, GP surgery, children's centre or school for children with learning disabilities.

In the letter, explain how you hope the work experience will support the development of your professional skills and personal attributes, inform your career choices and help prepare you for employment in the health and social care sector. Make sure you analyse how you hope the work experience will provide you with the opportunity to gain a realistic understanding of the health and social care sector. Explain that if you are successful in securing a placement with them, you will be bringing your work experience log with you. You also need to explain the importance of the log book in providing evidence of your skills and attributes.

Plan

- What am I being asked to do?
- How will I approach the task?

Do

- I know how to structure a letter.
- I can explain why I have decided to approach the task in a particular way.

Review

- I can explain what I have learned.
- I can identify how this learning experience relates to future experiences in the workplace.

B

Develop a work experience plan to support own learning and development

It is important to plan and prepare carefully for your work placement. You'll need a work experience plan to do this properly. This learning aim covers the things you need to consider when drawing up your plan, such as planning your first day.

Preparation for work experience

Make sure you check your travel arrangements, where and who you are to report to, and read any introductory information you have been given, before your first day. Set off in plenty of time, to allow for rush-hour traffic, public transport delays or parking problems, and for finding the place and person you are to report to. If you have the opportunity, you could try a practice run. Do not be late. Remember that first impressions are important.

Reflect

Think back to a time when a new learner joined your class at school or college. What did you think about them when you first saw them? What gave you this impression? Once you got to know them better did you change your impression? Why?

Expectations for learners on work experience

Dress

It takes less than 30 seconds for someone to make a judgement about you based on your appearance, body language and how you are dressed. You should find out beforehand what is considered appropriate dress. Keep make-up and jewellery to a minimum, wear clothes that are neat, respectable, smart, clean and suitable for the role, with clean shoes or boots in which you can walk comfortably. Your hair should also be clean and tidy, and in some settings you may be asked to keep it tied back. Head coverings are acceptable if they are part of your culture or religion. If you know you look the part, you will feel more at ease and confident.

Behaviour

It is important that you behave appropriately on work experience. Be polite and respectful, speak clearly, be prepared to listen carefully and ask for help when needed. If you are asked to do something that you consider trivial, such as making a cup of tea for your supervisor, do it willingly and with a smile, remembering that everyone has to start somewhere. Show that you are interested and try to develop a rapport with both the service providers and users. Take positive criticism as being given to help you improve, and listen and act on the advice offered. Complete all tasks set and, if you find yourself with nothing to do, use your initiative. Maybe tidy up or talk to a service user, rather than sit in a corner and wait to be told what to do. Be professional, cheerful, approachable and a good team worker. Remember, you are there to learn and the other service providers have a lot to teach you.

Do not:

- ▶ do anything you have not been told to do, such as touch equipment or medication
- ▶ act as though you think you know everything
- ▶ gossip about colleagues or service users
- ▶ make a fuss if you feel you are being asked to do something inappropriate by your supervisor. If it is something you are being asked to do immediately, politely say you'd rather not to your supervisor. If your supervisor repeatedly asks you to do things you should not be doing, contact your tutor at the first opportunity.

Practical considerations

Find out what you need to take with you and whether you need to have any security checks done.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

The Disclosure and Barring Service check is the new name for the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. If someone is applying for a job, whether it is paid or voluntary, which involves, for example, health care or working with children or vulnerable adults, or applying to foster or adopt a child, it is a legal requirement that they apply for a DBS check. The employer will ask for one to be carried out on your behalf if it is deemed to be necessary. The process involves completing an application form at the request of your employer, who will sign it and ask to see certain original documents such as your birth certificate or passport. The form is sent to the DBS. If the form has been correctly and accurately completed, and the facts do not raise any alarms, the DBS sends a certificate to the person who has applied for it. This certificate is shown to the employer to prove that the person has passed their DBS check.

If you are over 16 and there is any chance that you will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults at your work experience placement, you may be expected to apply for a DBS check. Similarly, if a work placement supervisor is to have day-to-day responsibility for you, the school may ask for a DBS check on the supervisor. However, in almost all work placements this will not happen because the supervisor will not have regular unsupervised contact with you.



- Think about people you come across in your day-to-day life. Who do you think will have been DBS checked?

Responsibilities and limitations for learners on work experience

Your responsibilities will include behaving and dressing professionally, as already mentioned. You should also arrive on time and, if for any reason you are unable to attend one day, it is your responsibility to alert your supervisor and tutor as early in the day as possible, certainly no later than the start of the working day. Other responsibilities include following the policies and procedures of your placement setting, following instructions given and completing all tasks set by your supervisor to the best of your ability, seeking help if needed. You need to remember to complete your work experience log as regularly as possible, making sure you collect the supporting evidence required as you go along, rather than trying to do it all at the end of your placement. Very importantly, you must be aware of safety issues, for both yourself and others. Make sure you have read and understood all the health and safety policies and that you know key facts, such as the location of the fire exits. Report all incidents and accidents and, if something is your fault, admit it and apologise straight away.

You will also be made aware of the limitations of your role. You are not there as a paid member of staff or to fill a vacancy, you are there to learn. Your supervisor will explain to you exactly what you are and are not allowed to do, and it is very important that you work within these limitations. You would never, for example, be allowed to give anyone their medication, or let an older person with dementia wander out of a residential care home. Most organisations have a work experience policy, which can usually be found online, and can provide you with information about your responsibilities and limitations.

Providing intimate personal care

If you are on work placement at, for example a hospital or residential care home you might be shown how to give someone a bed bath or provide other forms of intimate care by a supervisor, if the patient gives their permission for you to be there. However, you would not be allowed or expected to attend to any intimate personal care tasks.

Handling confidential information

You will have a responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information you may have access to during your work placement. Many organisations have work experience confidentiality agreement forms and you may be asked to sign one before you start your placement. Remember that you must not refer to the names of individual service users in your work experience log and any photographs you include should be of objects such as wall displays, or the backs of groups of service users doing activities, so that their faces are not seen and they cannot be identified.

Link

This has been covered in learning aim A of this unit in the section on Clarifying expectations for employment in health and social care.

Research

Find some examples of confidentiality agreements on the internet. Then write a set of guidelines for a learner on a work experience placement on what they can and cannot do when handling confidential information, to keep themselves and the service user safe.

Researching specific work experience placements

Organisations

Your tutor will have a list of the appropriate settings for your work experience. Once you have decided which settings you would like to work in, you should research online to find out about specific organisations in your local area. Most settings have their own website but it is important to remember that this has been set up to attract service users to use their setting so it may not contain all the information you need. It is a good idea to look for inspection reports, for example, the Care Quality Commission monitors and inspects health and social care services, including hospitals, care homes, clinics and GP practices. You will find links to these reports on their website. These reports are in the public domain so anyone can read them. Other sources of information include local papers or the library.

Job roles

Information about specific job roles can be found on the internet or in offices on the high street, as mentioned earlier. Once you know what the role involves generally, you can research that role in the context of the setting and organisation in which you are interested. You could also talk to people, such as family and friends, who may work in the job role you are interested in to find out more.

Research

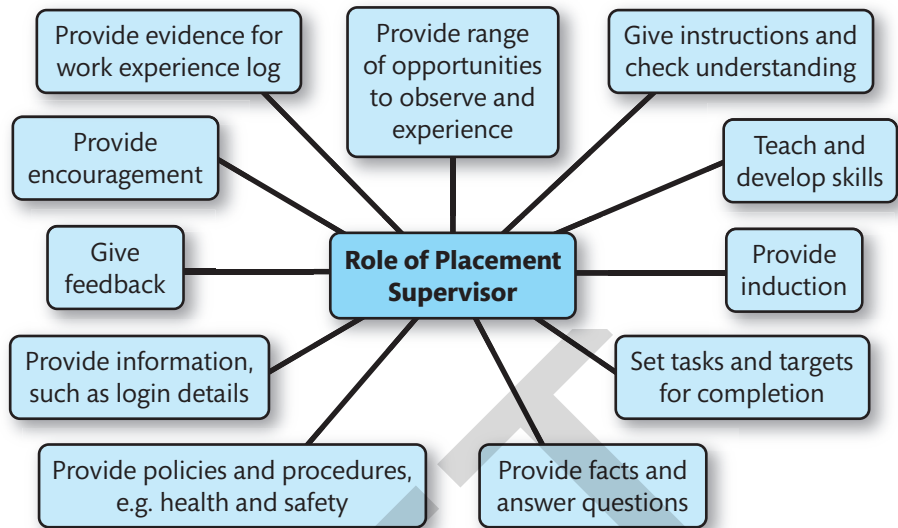
Pick a possible setting for part of your work experience placement and research the organisation and specific job role you are interested in within that setting. Make a one page information sheet to put in a class file for others to refer to.

Role of placement supervisors/mentors

The role of the work experience **supervisor** is an important one, because the lessons learned from a good supervisor will last a long time and may influence your career choices.

Key terms

Supervisor – a person who directs and oversees the work of a learner.



Key terms

Mentor – a person who gives advice and help to a younger or less experienced colleague.

► **Figure 6.3** Do you understand the difference between a supervisor and a mentor?

A **mentor** is someone who is not in a line management relationship with you but who can provide specific advice, guidance and training related to your work. A buddy may

Case study

First impressions

Peter and Maria are both going to the same place for work experience, a large rehabilitation centre for people who have some form of physical or brain injury.

Peter's parents work very hard but are not paid very much, so there is little spare money for clothes and bus fares.

He decides to wear his only pair of trousers with a shirt and his school blazer, from which he has removed the school badge. His clothes are all clean and well pressed, even though they have been worn many times before, and he will be able to take the blazer off if he gets too warm.

He is going to walk to his placement and has already had a trial run so he knows what time he needs to set off to arrive in plenty of time, and he knows which door he has to use to get in. When he arrives he waits patiently for someone to come to the door and then explains politely who he is and who he has been told to report to.



Maria's family are wealthy so money is no object. She decides to wear a designer jumper, because it is quite cool outside when she gets up, with a short skirt and high-heeled boots, because they go well with her outfit. She takes too long deciding what to wear and ends up taking a taxi to get there, arriving just on time. She rings the bell impatiently because she is anxious as she has only just arrived on time, and rushes inside saying, 'Hi. I'm Maria. I'm on work experience but I don't know who I need to report to.'

The centre is very warm because the service users are in bed some of the time and tend to feel the cold and there are several staircases but only two lifts, which they are asked not to use unless accompanying a service user.

Check your knowledge

- 1 What do you think the first impression of Peter and Maria on the service provider who answers the door will be?
- 2 What do you think the first impression of their joint work experience supervisor will be?
- 3 What is likely to happen when Peter and Maria start work around the centre, carrying cups of tea to residents and answering their buzzers?
- 4 What might the first impression of the residents be?

be allocated to look after you, for example at lunchtimes, and is someone you can ask questions of in a more informal way. They can give you informal support and advice when you need it.

II PAUSE POINT

Do you understand the expectations for work experience? What preparations will you need to make for your placement?

Hint

Write down all the points you can remember about how you need to prepare for work experience.

Extend

Why is it important to know the limitations of what you are allowed to do when on work experience?

Setting goals and learning objectives

An objective is more structured and specific than a goal. An objective is something that can be attained by taking certain steps. It is how you intend to go about achieving your goal. A **goal** is something you want to achieve. In order to get the most out of your work experience, it is important that you have a goal *and* **learning objectives**, which will give you the skills and knowledge that will help you achieve that goal. Your goal may be to choose a rewarding career in health and social care. Your objectives might be to gain a better understanding of various careers and roles, complete and review your work experience and complete this qualification, in order to make that decision and reach your goal.

Key terms

Goal – an aim or desired result.

Learning objective – a statement of the steps to be taken to gain the knowledge and skills needed to accomplish a goal.

Reflecting on current knowledge and skills

In order to set yourself a learning objective relating to your own knowledge and skills, you need to reflect on your current knowledge and skills, identify what they are and any areas for development. There are two types of skills:

- ▶ transferable skills: these are general skills that you need in any job role, such as interpersonal, team working and time management skills
- ▶ career specific skills: these are skills you need to work in a specific sector of work, for example certain practical skills, such as how to take someone's temperature.

Reflect

Reflect on the skills and knowledge you will need for work experience. You will have found out what they are when you researched your work placement/s. List the skills, both transferable and career specific, and what you will need to know about to work in that setting. Compare this list with your current knowledge and skills. What areas do you need to improve?

Identifying own strengths and areas for development

In order to set goals and learning objectives for your work experience, you first need to identify your own strengths and weaknesses. One way of doing this is to use a technique called a SWOT (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, **T**hreats) analysis. You would need to write your strengths and weaknesses in the top two boxes of a table such as Table 6.4, and then decide how your strengths can create opportunities for you and how your weaknesses may hinder you. Although it is excellent to focus on your strengths, it is also good to face up to your weaknesses and see the potential for personal growth.

Discussion

Using Table 6.4, do a SWOT analysis to identify your strengths and weaknesses in terms of your skills, attributes and knowledge. Swap your SWOT analysis with a friend. Study the analysis your friend has done of themselves and discuss both analyses, adding notes to your own, so you have a more thorough analysis. Use this to identify your five main strengths and five main areas for development.

Be totally honest with yourself. Do not claim something is a strength because you would like it to be true and think others would admire it in you. There is no point claiming to be confident if you are really shy. Similarly, do not put yourself down. If you are bubbly and outgoing then say that.

► **Table 6.4** Framework for a SWOT analysis

Strengths What do you do well? What do others see as your strengths?	Weaknesses What could you improve? What are others likely to see as a weakness?
Opportunities How can you use your strengths to create opportunities?	Threats What might happen if you do not overcome your weaknesses? How might your weaknesses allow others to gain an advantage over you?

Another aid to identifying your skills, attributes and knowledge is to take a psychological test or skills assessment online, such as the personality test on www.123test.com. Some of these tests are free and quick and give you a score on a number of important personality traits.

Work experience evidence log

Now you have practised reflecting on your current skills and knowledge and are about to start your work experience placement, you are ready to complete Part 1 of form HSC 5, which is for you to reflect on your skills at the start of the work placement, the attitudes you have developed and the experiences you have had, and how these have improved your performance.

Once you are on your work placement, you will be expected to self-assess your work skills by collecting evidence to prove that you have each skill. In your log form HSC T 3, Parts 1 and 2, identify the skills you need to consider. Each is linked to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or Care Certificate Standards.

Identifying established standards and values required for health and social care professionals

The NHS Constitution

When the NHS was created in 1948 it was to make good health care available to all and was based on three core principles, namely that it:

- meets the needs of all
- is free at the point of delivery
- is based on clinical need, not ability to pay.

These principles have been central to the development of the NHS ever since. In 2011, the Department of Health published the NHS Constitution, which sets out the standards and values that guide the NHS in all aspects of their work. This was last reviewed in 2015, and full details can be found in the NHS Handbook. You have already learned about the six core care values (see Understanding and applying care values in learning aim A).

► **Table 6.5** The NHS Constitution (Source: These principles are taken from www.nhs.uk)

Key principles	Principle	What does it mean for service users?
1	The NHS provides a comprehensive service available to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to diagnose, treat and improve both physical and mental health. • Duty to all individuals and must respect their human rights. • Duty to promote equality through its services.
2	Access to NHS Services is based on clinical need, not an individual's ability to pay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of charge except areas such as travel costs, wigs, prescriptions, eye care and dental care unless for those with low income who qualify for help with charges.
3	The NHS aspires to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In high-quality care, staff they employ, train and develop, leadership and management, and innovation. • All service users and providers to be treated with respect, dignity, compassion and care.
4	The NHS aspires to put patients at the heart of everything it does.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support service users to promote and manage their own health. • Services reflect needs and preferences of patients and their families and carers. • Actively encourage feedback to inform improvement of services.
5	The NHS works across organisational boundaries and in partnership with other organisations in the interest of patients, local communities and the wider population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated systems of organisations and services. • Bound together by common principles and values. • Work jointly with other local services to deliver improvements in health and wellbeing.
6	The NHS is committed to providing best value for taxpayers' money and the most effective, fair and sustainable use of finite resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public funds for health care used for benefit of all service users.
7	The NHS is accountable to the public, communities and patients that it serves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funded through national taxation. • Local NHS and patients with their clinicians make most decisions. • NHS accountable to government who are accountable to Parliament.

Research

Research the principles on which social care in the UK is based. How similar are they to those for health care? Find a way to present your comparison as clearly as possible.

When you are doing research tasks online make sure you use:

- the most up-to-date websites by including the current year as part of your search
- UK websites.

Identifying SMART targets for own work experience

An important part of your work experience plan is to set targets. Targets are the small, very specific steps that you take to reach your goal. You have already learned that objectives are the larger steps you are planning to take towards achieving your goal. An objective might be to develop your ability to work with different groups of service users or to learn and develop a new range of skills. A goal is what you are aiming for, what you want to achieve. It is more general and either achieved or not achieved. Your goal might be to identify whether working in a particular health or social care setting is right for you.

A target should be SMART. An example of a SMART target is: It is Monday today. I will find out by this Friday which bus I need to catch to get to my work experience placement by 8.30 am each day.

- ▶ **Specific** – the target is clearly stated, says exactly what you mean, and cannot be misunderstood.
- ▶ **Measurable** – it includes what you intend to find out and by when, so you can prove that you have met the target.
- ▶ **Achievable** – you must feel it is possible to achieve the target set otherwise you may be put off trying. Making a phone call or looking at a timetable by Friday is reasonable, so achievable.
- ▶ **Realistic** – the target set must be realistic, you must be able to do it. It is realistic for you to be able to find out this information either online or via a phone call in the time you have allowed yourself.
- ▶ **Time-related** – there is a deadline set by which to find out the information so progress can be assessed.

Work experience evidence log

Think about your work placement. Write five SMART targets for your work experience plan.



PAUSE POINT

Can you explain how to set goals and learning objectives?

Hint

Write down what you need to know before you can set goals and learning objectives for your work experience placement.

Extend

What is the difference between a target, a goal and a learning objective?

Key terms

Personal development goal – a goal that you aim for to improve some aspect of your skills and attributes to develop you as a person.

Proactive – making something happen rather than responding to a situation after it has happened, e.g. having a 'flu jab rather than getting 'flu and having to take 'flu remedies.

Setting personal development goals

To set a **personal development goal** you first need to reflect on your current skills and attributes to identify weaknesses, which you can then aim to improve. Reaching a personal development goal will help you in all aspects of your life. Reflective practice is thinking about what you do or know, and learning from it, to improve the way you work. By learning to do this you will increase in confidence and become a more **proactive** service provider.

You can use reflective skills to think about something you have done, such as an interview or a presentation, what you need to do better and how to make improvements next time you do something similar. Things you need to do better become your personal development goals.

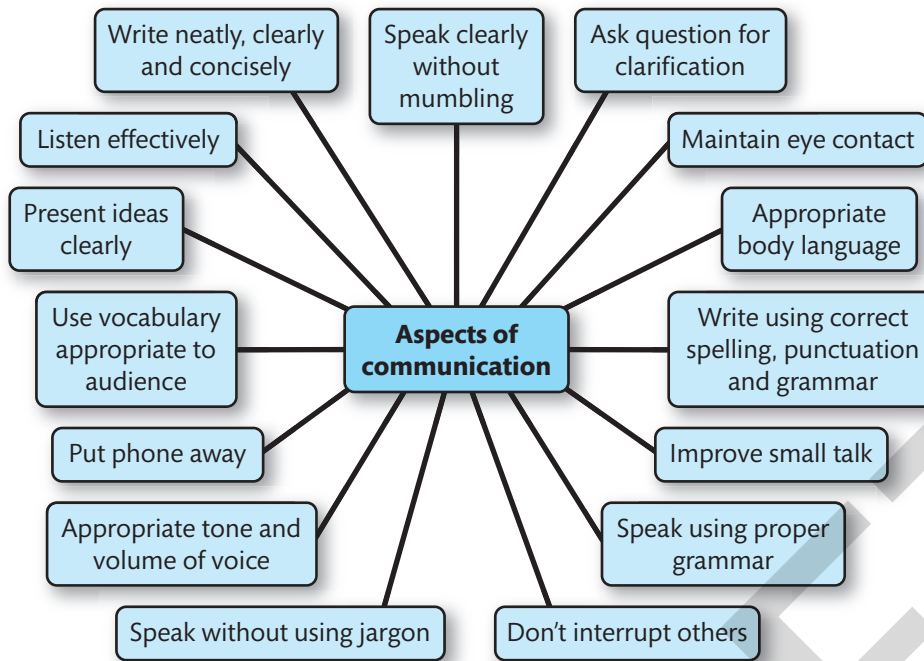
Link

You started to learn about reflective skills at the start of this unit, in learning aim A.

Developing communication skills

Communication skills are considered to be one of the most important skill sets in every employment sector.

A personal development goal of developing your communications skills is quite general. It is better to first identify which aspect of your communication skills needs developing.



► **Figure 6.4** Can you think of any other aspects of communication that someone may need to improve?

Theory into practice

Reflect on a recent presentation you did to see how you could improve your communication skills. Repeat this process firstly with a conversation you have had recently with someone you did not really listen to properly, and secondly with a report or a piece of persuasive writing you have recently completed.

Create an action plan for the personal development goals you identified for developing your communication skills. In your action plan include a column for learning objectives, each of which would be to improve a specific aspect of your communication skills, such as 'listen more effectively'. Next, include a column, subdivided into several rows, for your learning opportunities to improve this aspect. For example 'I will listen carefully in my work placement induction meeting'. Complete your table with columns such as 'Progress made'. Then carry out your plan.

Discussion

In a small group, discuss situations or occasions when you have made a mistake or been criticised. How did it make you feel? Did you worry about it for a long time? Did you do anything to make sure it did not happen again? How could you have dealt with it better?

Work experience evidence log

Form HSC T Part 3 has a section that requires you to organise and plan a range of activities to implement in a health and social care setting, during which you will need to demonstrate your communication skills. This task would support a personal development goal of improving your communication skills.

Improving confidence

A lack of confidence can be caused by a variety of factors, such as criticism, being unhappy about personal appearance, being over-protected as a child, fear of the unknown, being unprepared, lack of skills or knowledge and previous failures. This can lead to being hesitant and withdrawn, using fillers such as 'um' and 'ah', a tendency to not try anything new and shying away from attention.

If one of your personal development goals is to improve your confidence these are some of the ways to do it.

- ▶ Plan and prepare for an activity, such as your first day of work experience or an interview, to reduce your fear of the unknown. This gives you a feeling of having more control over a situation.
- ▶ Think positively by feeling good about your strengths and seeing your weaknesses as something you can work on and develop to make you even stronger.
- ▶ Adopt a positive outlook towards others, try not to complain or criticise but be pleased for their successes.
- ▶ Accept compliments rather than trying to shrug them off or putting yourself down.
- ▶ Accept that everyone makes mistakes and/or is criticised, so see these as learning opportunities and as a way to improve, rather than feeling upset, embarrassed or offended.
- ▶ Avoid conversation fillers such as 'um', 'like' and 'ah'. Do not fiddle nervously with your hair or sleeves and take your hands out of your pockets.
- ▶ Take opportunities to improve your knowledge, skills and attributes so you feel less nervous and better prepared for new situations.
- ▶ Learn to be **assertive**. This means being able to stand up for yourself, or something you feel is right without being **aggressive** or upsetting yourself or others, staying calm, positive and firm, and repeating your point of view without apologising for anything you say. It does not mean being aggressive, arrogant or acting in a superior manner.

Key terms

Assertive – being confident and assured.

Aggressive – behaving in a forceful way, ready to attack or confront.

Passive – accepting or allowing what happens, without offering any resistance or response.

Research

Research assertive behaviour techniques. With a partner, work on a role play to show a situation where one of you is first **passive**, then aggressive, then assertive, to show others what is meant by being assertive and how to do it.

If you have a high level of self-confidence you will try most things and are more likely to be successful.

Reflect

Add a personal development goal of becoming more confident to your practice action plan. For example, 'I will increase my confidence in meetings so that I can make a positive contribution'. Complete the other columns of the plan.

Key terms

Professional development goal – the aim to improve some aspect of your skills and attributes as part of your **professional** development.

Professional – belonging to an occupation that needs special training or education.

Competence – the ability to do something successfully or efficiently.

Setting professional development goals

A **professional development goal** is something you should aim for in your working life in order to improve some aspect of your skills and attributes. You might reach this goal by going on a course, being trained by a colleague while at work or by practising a skill.

Developing competence

An important way to develop **competence** is on the job. Your work experience placement will be invaluable in developing your competence. For example, you will learn what is involved in various job roles and be trained to develop the ability to do at least part of that role successfully. Opportunities may arise for you to take part in

a training session with your colleagues at your work placement setting, or to attend a training course outside the setting. Reading and studying aspects of role requirements, such as policies and procedures, on your own will also help develop your competence.

You will learn about legislation that applies to your work setting, so will know the reasons why, and how to apply health and safety measures, for example. An important competence to develop is the ability to carry out risk assessments.

The National Occupational Standards (NOS), referred to in your work experience log, describe the minimum standard to which you are expected to work, and the skills, knowledge and understanding you need to undertake a task to a nationally recognised level of competence.

Work experience evidence log

You can prepare for learning about health and safety and security measures by completing the 'legislation and policies' pro forma in Appendix 2 of your work experience log. This requires you to research into some key pieces of legislation so you can see which of your setting's policies reflect different parts of the legislation.

Form HSC T Part 3 has a section that requires you to plan an activity with a service user and carry out a risk assessment. This would support a professional development goal of improving your competence in carrying out risk assessments.

Developing technical ability

Your work experience will also be invaluable in giving you opportunities to develop your technical skills. Some of the technical skills identified by the WorldSkills organisation for health and social care include the safe storage of materials, secure storage of medication, safe disposal of waste material, data handling, using specialist equipment, moving service users safely and monitoring health parameters such as blood pressure and temperature. You will know which technical skills you will need at your work placement and can set yourself a professional development goal based on these, for example to learn how to prevent and control infection.



Discussion

In a small group, discuss the technical skills you expect to come across on your work placements. Discuss which you think you will be allowed to try to use and develop yourself, and which you will only be allowed to watch others use. What is the difference between the two groups of answers?

- Do you always use the facilities provided in hospitals and other settings to help prevent infection?

Research

Find out the correct way to wash your hands to reduce the spread of germs to others. Design an eye-catching leaflet to present this information clearly.

Work experience evidence log

Form HSC T Part 3 has a section that requires you to select, follow and carry out the procedures to prevent and control infection. This would support a professional development goal of improving your competence in infection prevention and control techniques.

You are now ready to complete your personal and development plan, which is form HSC T 4 Part 3, and your work experience placement and action plans, which can be found in Appendix 2 of your work experience log.

Assessment practice 6.2

B.P3

B.P4

B.M2

AB.D1

Write an action plan for your work experience. Write a commentary to accompany the plan in which you explain:

- your responsibilities and limitations
- how you plan to meet your personal and professional development goals
- the importance of your plan in supporting your learning and development while on work experience placement
- how you have prepared for your work experience, justifying the benefits of preparation in supporting your understanding of the expectations of work experience.

Plan

- Is there a form in my work experience log that will help me structure the first part of this activity?
- Do I need clarification around anything asked for in the commentary?

Do

- I can make connections between what I have learned and the task.
- I can seek support when I am unsure of how much detail to provide.

Review

- I can identify how this activity relates to the workplace.
- I can use this experience on my work placement to monitor my progress.

C

Carry out work experience tasks to meet set objectives

Work experience tasks

You should now be ready to carry out your work experience placement.

Assisting and participating in clinical tasks (providing direct care for service users as appropriate)

Clinical tasks are tasks carried out on a service user, such as taking their temperature, rather than tasks based on theories or laboratory results. Carrying out a clinical task makes you a **direct carer** because you are providing care for a service user, as opposed to **indirect care**, when someone provides a service to help you, as a direct carer, look after a service user.

Interacting with service users

An important part of your work experience will be interacting with service users. To do this you will need to use your communication and interpersonal skills, covered at the start of this unit, to develop a rapport with service users so that they trust you and feel comfortable with you helping with their care. You will need to be flexible, patient, approachable and empathetic, while making sure you manage your time and get your tasks done.

For example, if you are working in a residential care home you will find that some of the residents are lonely, maybe having few visitors, if any, as their partners and friends of a similar age may have died. Spending time talking to them is an important part of the role. They will be happy to feel that someone is listening to them and making them feel as though they still have something worth saying. Asking them about their families by commenting on family photos, or asking what they used to do for work, will show that you are interested in them as a person. You will be asked to do tasks, such as collecting them from their room to go to the dining room, maybe taking them in a wheelchair or walking with them if they use a walking frame, or accompanying them on trips out, maybe to a local garden centre for coffee. You may also be asked to help run activities that keep the residents entertained and mentally alert. If you find yourself with free time, you could organise a sing-song or do puzzles with residents.

If you are working in a hospital, for example, service users may be worried or maybe even frightened, because they are ill or about to have an operation. Some will be feeling lonely and missing their families between visiting times, while some will receive no visitors at all. They will need reassuring and their minds taking off their situation so being kind and caring and chatting to them will be a comfort. You will also be doing tasks such as bed making, observing drug rounds and applying simple dressings, or maybe taking patients' blood pressure and temperature, under supervision. Or you may be asked to take service users for a walk up and down the ward as they start to feel better.

Discussion

Imagine that you are ill in hospital. With a partner, discuss how you might feel if no one came to visit you. How might this affect your recovery? The nurses are often too busy to stand and talk to patients for any length of time. What could a work experience learner do to help?

Wherever you are working, do not forget that you must know your limitations, and be mindful of them. You should not give advice to service users, for example, or promise them that they will get better, or take them for a walk outside without permission. You will not be involved in any activities where specialist training is involved, such as manual handling, or contact with clinical waste products.

Case study

Not the best of days

Josie is in her third week of work experience placement in a hospital. She is really enjoying the work and is beginning to feel relaxed and more confident. The role she is currently studying and supporting is that of a healthcare assistant.

Josie has helped to tidy up the ward and get the patients ready for afternoon visiting time and has finished the

tasks she has been allocated. Her supervisor is on a break. Nirpal, who is 6 years old, has knocked a dressing off a wound on his arm and it has started to bleed. Josie decides to use her initiative and puts a wad of lint on it to stop the bleeding, securing it with sticking plaster as she does not know where the original dressings are kept.

Key terms

Clinical – the observation and treatment of a person rather than looking at theories or laboratory research.

Direct carer – someone who provides care for a service user, such as a doctor or social worker.

Indirect care – providing a service that helps direct carers look after a person, provided by people such as GP receptionists or hospital chefs.

She thinks this will do as a temporary measure. She has just finished, so has not had time to ask her supervisor to check she has done it correctly, when his parents arrive at visiting time. They express concern because Nirpal is allergic to sticking plaster. His parents are annoyed and Nirpal gets upset because he likes Josie and does not want her to get into trouble. Josie panics and takes the plaster off and the wound starts to bleed again.

Check your knowledge

- 1 What mistakes has Josie made?
- 2 What could have been the possible consequences for Nirpal in this situation?
- 3 What should Josie have done as soon as she realised she had made a mistake?
- 4 What lessons do you think Josie will learn from this incident?

Assisting with meals

If you complete your work experience in a setting where service users stay for at least the day, you may be asked to assist with meals. This could be helping staff tidy up tables and offering hand wipes before a meal, distributing meals and serving drinks, or maybe helping some service users by cutting up food or even feeding them. While you are doing this, you will be interacting with the service users. You will need to use your communication skills, as well as attributes such as patience and understanding. You might also be expected to complete a food record chart if you are in a hospital setting, for example.

It is very important that you take care to give the right meal to the right person, as keeping a patient properly fed aids their recovery. On a hospital ward, for example, patients will have chosen from the menu according to their likes and dislikes. Meals and visiting times are important events when you are in hospital. A service user may have been looking forward all morning to their meal. If they receive something they do not like it may not only be disappointing but they may not be able to eat it. More importantly, however, some will have chosen meals due to cultural or religious preferences, or due to allergies or other diet restrictions. Some services users may be waiting for investigations, or an operation and will have 'Nil by mouth' written above their beds and in their notes. If you give them a meal and they eat it, they may not then be able to have the operation or investigation, causing them and their families delay and distress. This will also waste hospital resources as their bed will be tied up for a day longer and the surgical staff will have allocated a theatre slot for that patient which they now cannot use.

It is important that you observe the correct procedures in regards to health and safety and hygiene, so if you are told to wear a disposable hair net and use hand gel, that is what you must do.

Assisting and participating in non-clinical tasks (not directly relating to the provision of care for service users)

Attending meetings

You may be invited to attend meetings, for example team meetings. This will be as an observer so it is important that you sit still and quietly and do not disturb other participants. You must listen carefully as you will learn about how meetings are run, both well and less well from the experience. You may also be asked for your opinion if, for example, they are talking about a service user you have spent quite a lot of time with.

General office tasks

You will be asked to do activities following clear guidelines, such as helping with errands, photocopying, filing and answering the telephone. You will be told by your supervisor that you should not have any inappropriate or unsupervised access to computers and service users' or staff members' medical records. It is important that you are mindful of the legislation regarding confidentiality and the confidentiality agreement you may have signed.



- ▶ Is your work experience clinical or non-clinical? Try to get experience of both before setting career goals.

Promoting person-centred approaches

A person-centred approach, or personalisation, means that the service user is at the centre of the care and support they are receiving and it is matched to their needs. The quality of care you can provide will be improved if you know all about the person, not just what their capabilities and condition are currently. This allows for the fact that we are all individuals. If, for example, two people have the same illness it does not mean that their care and support needs are the same. A care plan sets out in detail the support and care that has been agreed for a service user. Representatives of the services the person needs meet and work together to make sure the service user receives the most appropriate and effective care. More importantly, the service user and their family are consulted on what they want to happen now, and in the future. You will be expected to treat a service user as the most important person when meeting their care and support needs by continually listening to them and their families, making accurate records and regularly referring to their care plan, as the care plan will continually change and evolve as care needs change. Again, this will require good communication skills.

Importance of supervision in work experience

Supervision is very important because a good supervisor makes sure that you understand the policies, procedures and legislation, such as health and safety, you must abide by. This will:

- ▶ stop you from causing harm to yourself, other service providers and service users
- ▶ protect you and the service provider from blame, by ensuring you do not make mistakes.

Link

Learning aim A of this unit covers confidentiality, as does Unit 5, learning aim D.

Unit 5: Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs, learning aim C gives more detail about promoting personalisation.

Learning aim B of this unit covers the roles of placement supervisors/mentors.

Key term

Supervision – directing and overseeing someone's (a learner's) work.

Without supervision, you would not be allowed to try certain tasks. Supervision also allows you access to someone with time to answer your questions, explain things to you and give you advice and support. Your supervisor introduces you to the setting and to the profession, laying the foundations for your future career.

Using work experience placement reflective journals to link theory with practice, reflecting on how work experience influences your own professional development

Completing your work experience log, which includes recording a reflective journal, is an essential part of your work experience placement.

- ▶ It is a crucial part of your assessment for this unit.
- ▶ It allows you to record evidence of the skills you have developed and demonstrated.
- ▶ It provides evidence of you having successfully completed the placement.
- ▶ It gives you the opportunity to reflect on your achievements, strengths and weaknesses.
- ▶ It provides evidence of you developing and improving your skills, attributes, knowledge and health and social care practice when you apply for a job in this sector.
- ▶ It allows you to see or apply what you have learned before the work experience in practice, so linking theory to practice.

By reflecting on your work experience reflective journal, you will be able to see how far you have developed professionally, decide whether this particular type of service setting is one in which you would or would not like to work in future, and work out what you now need to do to develop your skills, attributes and knowledge further, so identifying your professional development needs.

Discussion

In a small group, discuss your ideas on how your work experience log helps you link theory to practice, and how work experience is influencing your professional development.

Work experience evidence log

Form HSC T 4, Section 4, Part 2 encourages you to reflect on the skills and attributes you have developed on work placement, and how this has improved your performance.



PAUSE POINT

Do you understand the tasks you may be expected to do during your work experience? Do any elements need clarification?

Hint

Draw a mind map of the key points.

Extend

Why is a person-centred approach so important in providing the best care and support for service users?

Work shadowing and observations

Work shadowing different professionals, as appropriate

You may be given the opportunity to **work shadow** one or more people for a day or two each. Work shadowing is where you observe someone in their day-to-day job, rather than having hands-on experience, to provide you with an insight into that job role. This allows you to:

- ▶ see how other staff and teams work
- ▶ gain insight into the roles and responsibilities of those you work shadow
- ▶ get a better idea of how different people work together in the same setting, so getting a better overview of the setting
- ▶ learn by observing and asking questions
- ▶ spend time reflecting on their role when talking to them about their job
- ▶ observe them doing tasks that you are not allowed to do.

You will observe the person you are shadowing taking part in a range of activities, such as watching them interact with service users, taking clinical measurements, using specialised equipment, attending meetings and interacting with other service providers, both from within and outside the setting.

Observing specific procedures, as appropriate

When you observe a service provider carry out a specific procedure, such as taking a service user's temperature, you need to be attentive, showing respect to the person carrying out the procedure. You must also respect the patient's privacy and that they may be feeling unwell, so ask questions after you have left their bedside. Remember that the focus must always be on the service user, so as well as observing the procedure, make sure you notice how the person carrying it out interacts with the service user, building **rapport** and implementing the care values. You should make notes and reflect on the experience as soon as possible afterwards, so you do not forget anything.



- ▶ How does this healthcare professional show that she has a rapport with the baby whose temperature she is taking?

Working relationships and agreed ways of working in health and social care

There are many different working relationships in your work setting. These are all based on professionalism, values and principles of care. Everyone is expected to show respect to, and support the rights of, everyone they work with. Working relationships may be between colleagues, between managers and those whom they manage, or

Key term

Work shadowing – observing a person doing their job to learn about their role.

Key term

Rapport – an understanding relationship between two people that allows communication between them.

with service users. Some will be formal, for example with your work supervisor and those in more senior positions, or with professionals from outside your setting. Others will be more informal, such as with the people you work with every day and with other work experience learners. As you develop a working relationship with a service user it may become more informal. Talking about holiday plans and families helps you to get to know them better and helps them trust and like you, but it is inappropriate to become too close or involved.

Ways of working are agreed in every work setting. Policies and procedure will be in place to make sure that requirements, standards and expectations laid down by regulatory bodies and through legislation are met. There will be boundaries set by professional codes of conduct, and by an agreed code of conduct within your workplace setting. You will be expected to follow these ways of working to promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone who works there.

Reflecting on work practice and procedures used within the setting

Reflecting on work practice and procedures will help you to gain a better understanding of them and will also give you the opportunity to look for areas that can be improved. If you work in a residential care home, for example, you may think that the way laundry is managed in the care home is not very efficient, with residents regularly being given the wrong items of clothing. You might have a good idea to improve this process. You should suggest this to your supervisor tactfully. If your suggestion is implemented, it will benefit service users and reduce the time wasted by service providers in sorting out mistakes. It will give you a useful insight to record in your work experience log. Additionally, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that your idea and knowledge improved a working practice, which may be useful if you eventually pursue a career in this area.

Reflect

Reflect on your work experience setting. Can you think of any work practice which you have observed that seems inefficient? How could it be improved? In a small group, swap your ideas to see if others in the group think your idea would be an improvement.

Assessment practice 6.3

C.P5

C.P6

C.M3

C.D2

Reflect on tasks you have completed on your work experience, or, if you have not yet started your placement, during a holiday or weekend job or on your level 2 work experience. Write a report in which you:

- describe how you demonstrated work-related skills to complete three set tasks and for each one how you know you did this proficiently and confidently
- describe how work shadowing and observation can support the development of your skills while on work placement
- describe examples where you took the initiative to carry out activities within your limitations and those of the settings, selecting appropriate skills and techniques for at least two different situations.

Plan

- Which appropriate tasks have I completed?
- How will I structure this report?

Do

- I can ask my tutor or supervisor for clarification.
- I am recording any problems I experience and am looking for ways to solve these.

Review

- I know where I have learning gaps.
- I have a better appreciation of the importance of reflecting on practice.

D Reflect on how work experience influences own personal and professional development

At the end of your work experience placement it is important that you reflect on the experience as a whole in order to work out what you need to do next.

Reviewing personal and professional development

Reflective practice is an ongoing activity

It is important to understand that reflective practice is an ongoing activity, which you should use throughout your working life. Service users will look to you to provide a high quality of care and support, so you will need to continually reflect on your working practice in order to keep improving it. Reflective practice enables you to be honest about your professional practice and challenges you to take a step back to look at your own experiences to get a better understanding of good practice, as well as the changes needed to improve what is working less well.

Theories and frameworks for reflective practice

Kolb developed a reflective learning cycle (1984) for learning through experience based on four stages.

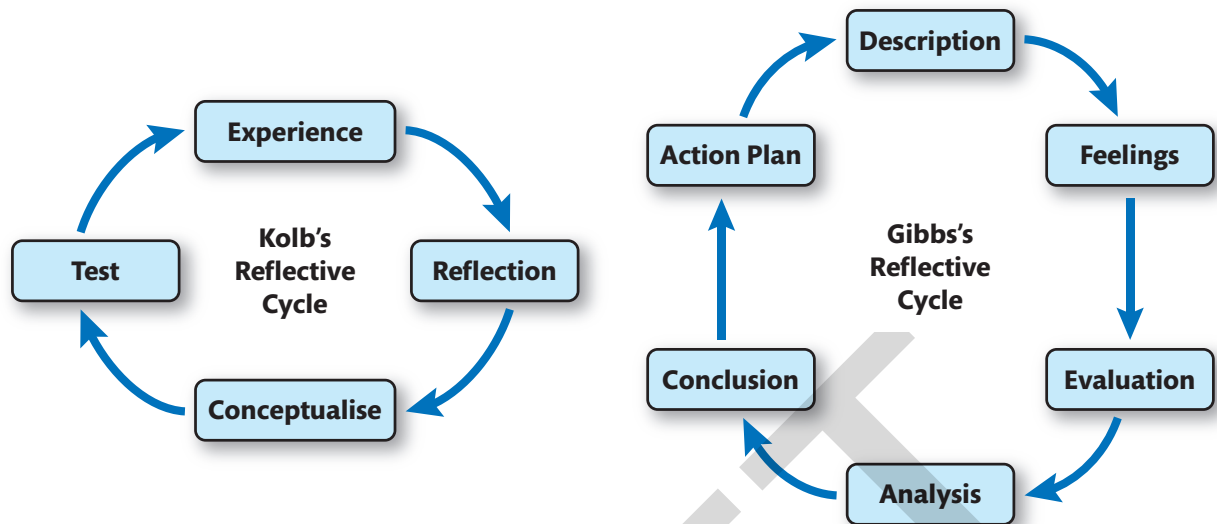
- ▶ Experience – doing it.
- ▶ Observations and reflections – reviewing and reflecting on the experience.
- ▶ Conceptualise (development of ideas) – learning from the experience.
- ▶ Testing ideas in practice – planning, trying out what you have learned.

Gibbs developed this into his six-stage reflective cycle (1988), a model that encourages learning through repetition, by repeating an improved activity after carrying out the reflective cycle, as shown in Step by step: Reflective practice.

Step by step: Reflective practice

6 Steps

- 1 Description of the actual experience: What happened? What did you do and how did you do it?
- 2 Feelings: What were you thinking and feeling? How did you react?
- 3 Evaluation: What was good and bad about the experience?
- 4 Analysis: What sense can you make of the situation? What have you learned from the experience?
- 5 Conclusion: What else could you have done? What have you learned from reflecting on this experience?
- 6 Action plan: If this situation arose again what would you do? What do you need to do differently next time?



► **Figure 6.5** Compare the two models. Which do you feel is most useful and why?

Another, simpler method is to ask four key questions:

- What worked well and why?
- What did not work well and why not?
- What will I do the same next time?
- What will I do differently next time?

This is a similar approach to a SWOT analysis, which you learned about earlier in this unit (see learning aim B).

Research

There have been many theories and frameworks developed for reflective practice. Research five of them and put them in the order in which they were developed (chronological order). Produce a summary that is attractive and clear, in a style and form of your choosing, and be prepared to discuss which one you like best and why.

Reflect

Think about a task you have recently completed on your work experience. Use Gibbs's learning cycle to reflect on how you carried out the task and how you could do it better in the future. Then reflect on your overall personal and professional development during your work experience, using the Step by step: Reflective practice.



- Are you regularly completing and reviewing your work experience log?

Reviewing work experience reflective journal

During your work experience you should have revisited and reviewed your work experience reflective journal regularly. It is good practice to set a time each week when you will check through it to see what you should be completing at that point, and to record the skills you have used that week. Now you have completed your work placement, you need to go through the whole of your log to see if there is anything missing.

Evaluating own performance

The practice of reviewing your work experience reflective journal at least once a week will ensure that you keep your log up to date, track your progress towards meeting

your targets and development goals and encourage you to take action if progress is not as you wanted.

To evaluate your own performance you need to:

- ▶ ask yourself if you have met your targets
- ▶ try to be specific – do not make vague statements such as ‘I think my communication skills are great overall’, use expressions such as ‘I have demonstrated good communication skills, especially in listening and writing. I still need to be more confident when speaking in a meeting or to a group of people, as shown when ...’
- ▶ not belittle your achievements – if your work placement supervisor praised the aspect of your work you are evaluating, say so. If you have shown, for example, your willingness to work hard by staying late to help a colleague finish a task, or have helped by volunteering to do something extra or something others did not want to do, say so
- ▶ be honest – if you made a mistake say so, but also say what you did to put the situation right
- ▶ not be defensive – if your tutor or supervisor says you have not shown a particular skill and you think you have, do not take it personally, ask for clarification and listen closely to what is said, so you can learn from what they are saying
- ▶ identify weaknesses and suggest what you need to do to put them right.

Discussion

With a partner, discuss any mistakes you made on your work experience and how you dealt with them. Looking back, do you think you could have dealt with your mistakes better? How? What have your mistakes taught you?

Reflecting on own personal and professional development

You need to use reflective practice to decide whether you have met your personal and professional development goals. Look back at the goals you set yourself and reflect on how far you have moved towards meeting those goals.

Work experience evidence log

You need to use reflective practice to complete the final part of your personal and professional development plan in your work experience log, which asks how reviewing your progress towards your goals over a period of time has helped your own professional development.

Form HSC T 3 will remind you about which skills for work in health and social care settings you managed to use and collect evidence of, so you can reflect on what you need to do to fill any gaps in those skills. You can also use form HSC T 5, the tutor observational visit report, and form HSC T 6, the work placement supervisor report, to reflect on those skills identified by your tutor and work supervisor as needing improving and developing.



PAUSE POINT

Explain how you reviewed your personal and professional development. How did you use your work experience log to do it?

Hint

Write a step by step process for reflective practice.

Extend

Why do you think it is important to be specific when reflecting on and evaluating your own performance?

Using feedback and action planning

The importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Continuing professional development (CPD) keeps professionals updated with relevant information, skills, training and knowledge throughout their working life. Along with **experiential learning** it ensures that you remain competent in your chosen profession, so that you will be able to provide better quality care and support. If you are prepared to take opportunities offered for CPD, you are likely to move up the career ladder more quickly. Evidence of CPD on your CV shows prospective employers that you have a certain level of competence and that you are serious about succeeding in your career. If you have been lucky enough to have taken part in at least one training course while on work placement, you will be able to include the date, the title of the course and the training provider on your CV, as well as details about your work placement/s. This will stand you in good stead when you have an interview for your chosen job.

CPD is not only important for the individual and the setting they work in, but also helps to improve the work sector as a whole. Professional service providers go through a process called performance management, usually once a year, where **feedback** is given on strengths and weaknesses and targets are set for training to improve the weaknesses, whether these are in knowledge or skills. It is an ongoing process throughout a professional's working life.

Key terms

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – the process of taking part in a range of learning activities to update, increase and improve your knowledge and skills throughout your working life.

Experiential learning – information or skills acquired through experience and observation, while working.

Feedback – reaction from other people about your performance, which can be used to inform improvement.

Identifying areas of positive and constructive feedback

When you have looked back through your work experience log, you will notice that there are places where your tutor or work experience supervisor has said some of your skills are good or excellent and you have received praise. This is called positive feedback. There may also be skills which have been identified as needing improving and developing, and maybe some comments to say what you need to do to improve. This is constructive feedback, which draws your attention to an area where you can improve. Such feedback is useful and is different from criticism which is given in a negative way and can upset and discourage you. A good supervisor will give you constructive feedback rather than criticism. You need to find the areas of positive and constructive feedback so that you know what you have done well and what you still need to strive to improve.

Work experience evidence log

Create a table with two columns. In the first column put the heading 'areas of positive feedback', in the second column put the heading 'constructive feedback'. Complete the table with examples from your work experience log.

Case study

Stay calm and carry on



Louise has recently finished her work placement at a GP's surgery in a health centre attached to a hospital. She really enjoyed her time there and felt she had become part of the team.

One of her most memorable experiences was when a 53-year-old man had a heart attack in the waiting area, where she was helping the receptionist behind the desk. The receptionist, who was her work experience supervisor, told Louise to run to get a doctor. Louise used her initiative and knocked on the nurses' door and shouted what had happened on her way down the corridor to find a doctor. She was mindful that all the

GPs had patients with them, so she stood in the corridor outside their closed doors and said calmly but loudly 'Is there a doctor available to help a man who has collapsed with chest pains in the waiting area, now please?' Several came running out and one of them went and gave the man CPR, while waiting for the paramedics to arrive.

Louise's work experience supervisor later gave her some glowing positive feedback in her work experience log, but also said that she had caused alarm among some patients when she had shouted outside the doors.

Check your knowledge

- 1 What positive feedback do you think Louise's work experience supervisor gave her about her skills and attributes in this situation?
- 2 How did Louise support the receptionist and help the patient?
- 3 Why did Louise not open a door and speak quietly to a GP?
- 4 What could Louise's work experience supervisor have said to make the feedback about shouting in the corridor more constructive?

Highlighting areas for improvement

Now you have evaluated your own performance and identified areas of constructive feedback, you know which skills and knowledge need improving. You need to highlight those which you feel are most important and which will help you most in the future, such as improving a specific area of your communication skills, trying to be more empathetic and learning more about a particular job role.

Work experience evidence log

There is a pro forma action plan that you can use to reflect on your skills and activities throughout your work placement. You can use one of the reflective practice methods described earlier to identify which skills and activities you need to develop further and to help you complete the final row of the form.

Creating an action plan for personal and professional development

Creating an action plan will help you focus your ideas and decide what steps you need to take to achieve your goals. Your plan should have a series of targets that you aim to meet to achieve each of your goals. An example for just one personal development goal is shown below. Other examples may have a different time scale for each step and several people identified to give support. A target in an action plan to meet a professional development goal might be to seek other work experiences or training.

Worked Example

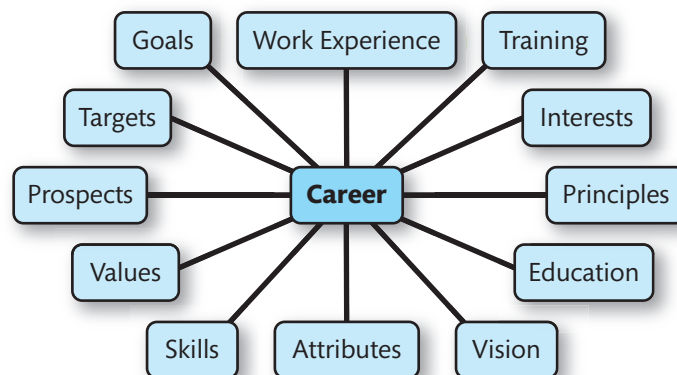
Goal	Benefits	Steps needed	Timescale	Support
To improve my listening skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information shared. • Happier service users, colleagues, family and friends. • Fewer mistakes or misunderstandings. • Increased confidence. • Calmer atmosphere. • Better relationships. 	Instead of thinking what to say next while the other person is speaking, focus on what is being said.	Friday	A tutor, family member or friend to have a conversation with me.
		Ask questions for clarification, to check you have understood what the speaker has said.		
		Reflect on what has been said by summarising and restating it to the speaker.		
		Listen to the words being said, but also be aware of how they are being said and of any non-verbal messages, such as body language.		
		Do not be distracted, for example by a mobile phone. Put it away, or turn it off, during a conversation.		
		Listen to feedback from the speaker.		
Repeat the steps above until you receive positive feedback.	The following Friday			

Work experience evidence log

An action plan pro forma can be found in Appendix 2 of your work experience log.

Reflect

Reflect on your work experience. Pick one of your personal development goals and make a plan, using the same headings as in the Worked Example.

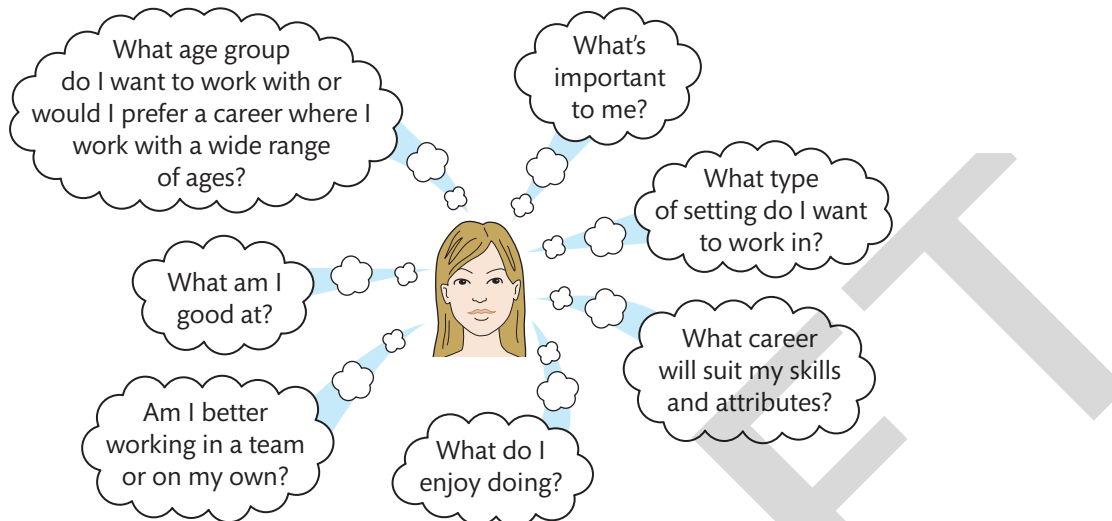


► **Figure 6.6** Do you know what all these terms mean? If not, look them up in a dictionary.

Identifying career goals

Now you have completed your work experience, you will have decided that a particular type of work and setting either is or is not right for you. To identify your

career goals, you first need to decide on the area of health and social care in which you are most interested in working. You could reflect on your work experience placement to help you decide. You then need to decide what type of job in that area is best suited to your skills and attributes. Start by setting aside some time to think about this properly. Ask yourself questions such as those in Figure 6.7.



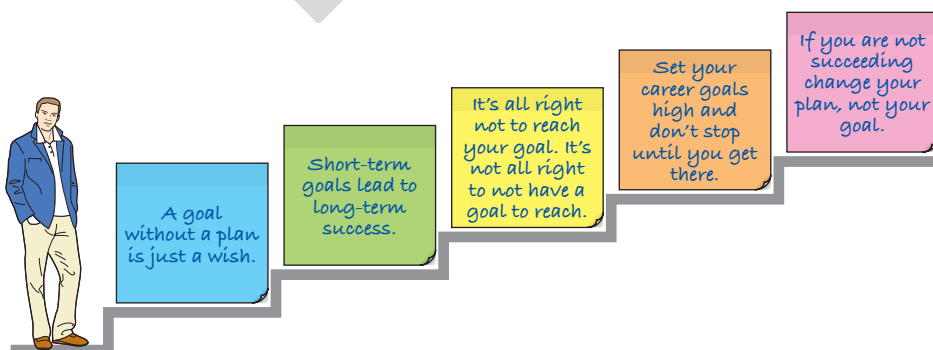
► **Figure 6.7** Can you think of any other questions that are important when setting your career goals?

If you need more advice, speak to people such as a tutor, a careers adviser or someone you know who works in the area you are considering, and use online research to gain further information. You could write an action plan to set out on the journey towards achieving your career goals.

You may decide to:

- go to college or university to gain qualifications, get the job you want and aim to get regular promotions until you are in a management position
- get a job and attend college on day release, or in the evening, and aim for promotion
- get a job and learn on the job, and either provide direct care and support to service users or aim for promotion.

Then set yourself a short-term goal (about one year), a medium-term goal (about five years) and a long-term goal (about 20 years), a vision of where you eventually hope to be in your career. Good luck.



► **Figure 6.8** What are your aspirations? What are your career goals?

Use and improve the work you have completed during learning aim D to write the following.

- A review of your own strengths and areas for development, in response to feedback on your work experience placement.
- A personal and professional development plan that includes your personal and professional development goals, based on the completion of your work experience placement.
- A report that assesses and justifies how planning and self-reflection on skills developed during your work experience has contributed to your personal and professional development, both during your work experience placement and in your plans for your future personal and professional development.

Plan

- What tasks have I already completed that will help me with this activity?
- Is there any part of this activity about which I need clarification?

Do

- I am spending some time planning out my approach to this activity.
- I understand when I need to be reflective and when I need to carry out commands, such as assess and justify.

Review

- I can explain what the task is and what skills I've used during its completion.
- I can make informed assessments of my development goals based on reflection.

Further reading and resources

General careers advice: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>, www.yell.com, www.careerconnect.org.uk

Skills: www.wikihow.com, www.skillsyouneed.com

Employers' requirements for work placement: HSE – www.hse.gov.uk

Careers advice: Job roles in adult social care – www.skillsforcare.org.uk

NHS principles and care values: www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland

Dementia: www.scie.org.uk/publications, www.alzheimers.org.uk

Safeguarding young people on work experience: www.education.gov.uk

Research organisations: www.cqc.org.uk

National Occupational Standards: www.skillsforhealth.org.uk

WorldSkills standards in health and social care: www.worldskills.org

Careers and work experience placements: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk

Person-centred approaches: www.citrustrainingsolutions.co.uk

Job shadowing: www.mmu.ac.uk

THINK ▶ FUTURE



Michael O'Hare
Work experience
manager

I work in a large hospital and it's my job to organise our centralised work experience placement programme. I'm involved in communicating with tutors who are looking for work experience opportunities for their learners. I also have to complete paperwork that needs to be done prior to learners being placed here, and I act as supervisor while the learners are with us. When learners first arrive here, I give them an induction, which involves general information about the hospital and its work. The induction also details issues such as the rules and regulations that must be followed, including health and safety, the confidentiality agreement they need to sign, and what they will actually be doing on the placement. I organise any special clothing, equipment, security passes, ID badges and login details they may need and show them round. After this, I hand them over to their allocated mentor, who they will be working with, or work shadowing, in the department or on the ward in which they will be working. I'm on hand to provide help and advice if they have problems, do observations, give feedback and help them collect evidence for their work experience logs.

I'm in charge of the whole work experience programme, including mock interviews, in which the learners are given an experience of a job interview. This role is very rewarding, as I feel I'm helping young people towards their chosen career, and helping the mentors to develop different skills. I need to be approachable, empathetic, assertive, well organised and knowledgeable about the whole organisation and its work. I also need good skills in all aspects of communication.

Focusing your skills

Interpersonal skills

An important part of your work experience will be interacting with patients.

- Remember that you are a work experience learner, so tell the patient that and do not try to give any medical advice.
- Check that they want to chat, and if they do not, leave them alone as they may be in pain or tired.
- Ask the patient's permission if you want to ask about why they are in hospital, but you do not have to talk to them about their illness. They may prefer to talk about something else to take their mind off their problems.
- Some will be lonely as not all are lucky enough to have visitors, so you will lift their spirits if you spend some time talking with them.

Writing skills

You may be involved in adding information to a patient's records. If you are asked to do this, you should:

- listen very carefully and write the information down accurately
- ask for the information to be repeated if you did not hear properly
- write neatly and legibly, so others can read what you have written
- remember not to talk about any information you have been given.

Getting ready for assessment



Cosmina is working towards a BTEC National in Health and Social Care. She was given an assignment for learning aim B with the following title: 'Develop a work experience plan to support your own learning and development, and explain why it is important to do this'. The plan had to:

- ▶ include at least five goals, and the targets to be taken towards each of the goals, deadlines, benefits and support needed
- ▶ be clearly and attractively presented, and reflect her own responsibilities and limitations on her placement.

Cosmina shares her experience below.

How I got started

First I collected all my notes on this topic and put them into a folder. The textbook referred to pro formas in the work experience log, so I decided to read through the log to see what was included that would help me structure my plan. I also made contact with my work experience placement supervisor and asked if I could go along to ask him why he thought an action plan was a good idea. I talked to learners who had already been on a work placement to collect their opinions.

How I brought it all together

I decided to use a variety of fonts, colours and pictures to make the work look attractive.

- ▶ I wrote a short introduction to explain my responsibilities and limitations on work experience placement.
- ▶ I created my own version of a work experience action plan pro forma, which included my personal and professional development goals.
- ▶ I wrote a follow-up piece explaining why it is important to have a plan to support my learning and development.
- ▶ I wrote a conclusion that explained the benefits of planning and preparation in supporting my expectations of work experience.

I also included some quotes from my work experience supervisor.

What I learned from the experience

After looking at the action plan in the work experience log, I decided to create my own version. I spent quite a long time making it look attractive, and filled in a lot of the columns. Then I showed it to my tutor who advised me to use the headings from the one in the work experience log. She also pointed out that there was a worked example in learning aim D of the textbook that might help me. I wish I had shown it to my tutor before I'd spent a whole evening drawing up a template with the wrong headings. It was an easy job to change the headings, but I still felt I'd wasted some of the time. I also realised after I'd done quite a lot of work that I had confused the terms goals and targets. Although it didn't take long to put right, I was annoyed with myself that I hadn't checked my understanding.

I was glad that I asked my work placement supervisor for his opinion. I had only just met him as I'm about to start work experience, so it was good to get to know him a bit better before I started. I was apprehensive about approaching him, but was glad I made myself do it and feel that I have grown a little in confidence as a result.

Think about it

- ▶ Have you written a plan, with timings, so you can complete your assignment by the agreed submission date?
- ▶ Do you have notes on the key terms so that you know the difference between goals, targets and objectives?
- ▶ Is your information written in your own words, and referenced clearly where you have used quotations or information from a book, journal or website?