

BASW Professional Capabilities and Development Thematic Working Group; Position Statement October 2023

The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) is the professional association for social work in the UK with offices in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. With over 22,000 members we exist to promote the best possible social work services for all people who may need them, while also securing the well-being of social workers working in all health and social care settings.

The BASW [Professional Capabilities and Development \(PC&D\)](#) group consists of experienced practitioners involved in social work education representing practice educators, people with lived experience, universities, teaching partnerships, local authorities and partnering social work organisations. Our central aim is to ensure that those who are training to become social workers and those entering the profession have cohesive, quality assured standards to guide practice, which reflect social work values, anti-discriminatory practice and principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The PC&D group continues to work in partnership with others to develop and review social work practice education. The group have recently been actively engaged in the refresh of [Quality Assurance for Practice Learning \(QAPL\) \(2022\)](#), the [Practice Educators Professional Standards \(PEPS\) \(2022\)](#) and the current review of the [Professional Capabilities Framework \(PCF\) \(2023\)](#). We are also working with the [National Organisation for Practice Teachers \(NOPT\)](#) to address the need for strengthened support and recognition of the Practice Educator role and are about to start a project addressing the support needs of PEPS mentors and assessors.

The PC&D influenced and shaped the [BASW England response](#) to the Social Work England consultation on [readiness for practice](#).

The PC&D group recognises that there are currently several pressure points for social work practice education and are keen to be proactive and to collaborate with current work being carried out to review readiness for practice standards to ensure that quality assurance frameworks are strengthened and that prevailing issues for the profession are addressed. The PC&D group have discussed this collectively and have identified the following issues:

- The QAPL document and framework need to continue to be strengthened to provide a clear steer for accessing information, guidance and support and to address prospective changes to professional standards.
- The PEPS guidance document needs constant monitoring and review; recent discussion identified the need to update the domains and develop more synergy with the values.
- The PCF review report due to be completed this year will need to be widely shared and the recommendations considered.
- Increased support and recognition for all Practice Educators is required, including independent Practice Educators.
- Clearer career frameworks for social workers embarking on PEPS training to promote the completion of qualification to stage 2 status.
- Increased guidance and help for maintaining currency for Practice Educators.
- Increased access to support, information and guidance for Practice Educator Mentors/Assessors.

- Stronger commitment from Employers to support employees throughout their career, including ASYE, PEPS and further progression points towards senior social work roles.
- Consultation about potential benefits of the Practice Educator role gaining annotation status.

The PC&D group provides a focal point for ensuring that strong, integrated and meaningful standards are in place for the social work profession and are keen to be closely involved in the current consultation about the reforms proposed as part of the readiness for practice review.

We hope this position statement is helpful and received in the constructive spirit with which it is intended.

For further information please contact:

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